



A SPECIAL

P

PlayStation 2 SPECIAL EDITION

AUGUST 2002 / THE SPEED ISSUE / EVERY PLAYSTATION 2 RACING GAME REVIEWED / INCLUDING GT CONCEPT: 2002 TOKYO-GENEVA / STUNTMAN / WIPEOUT FUSION / SSX TRICKY / BURNOUT / V-RALLY 3 AND LOADS MORE / SCORCHING PREVIEWS OF COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3 / AUTO MODELLISTA AND ALL THE OTHER SPEED FREAKS HEADING TO PS2 / THE BEST RACING GAMES EVER / TOP TEN PS2 VEHICLES / HUGE TIPS GUIDES AND TONS MORE!

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THE UK'S BESTSELLING PLAYSTATION 2 MAGAZINE
OFFICIAL MAGAZINE-UK



PlayStation[®]2

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- SPEED-SATIONAL PREVIEWS OF **ALL** THE RACERS ZOOMING ONTO PS2!
- THE BEST RACING GAMES EVER! TOP TEN PS2 VEHICLES! AND TONS MORE!

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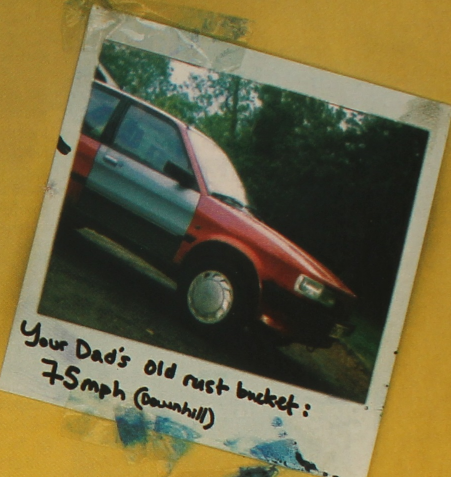
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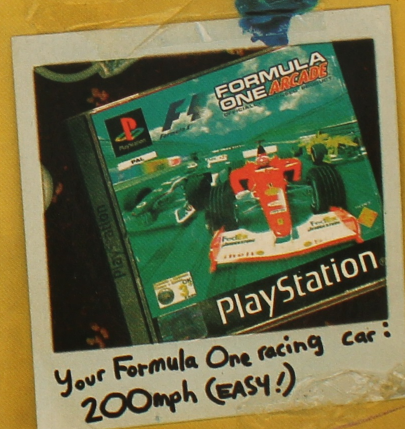
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PlayStation 2

SPECIAL EDITION: RACING GAMES

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PlayStation 2

SPECIAL EDITION: RACING GAMES



"If you feel the need
for speed, there are
videogames aplenty
to satisfy those boy
racer urges"

EDITOR'S LETTER

We've all been there: bombing through bustling city streets in a sleek convertible, shades on, sleazy jazz funk out of the speakers and the sun glaring overhead. As the speedometer rapidly spins past the 100mph mark, lightning-quick reactions are needed to weave in and out of traffic, before looking back in the wing mirrors to check out the vehicle-mangled carnage and ashen faces left in your wake. Unfortunately, that's around the time the police arrive to charge you with reckless driving and ban you from getting behind the wheel for the next 20 years. Bloody killjoys.

The above scenario probably explains our enduring love for the racing game. Do a ton down a busy street in real life and you'll be up before the beak. Do it in a game of *Burnout* and the buggers can't touch you for it. Oh yes, from the golden, olden days of *Out Run* right up to *GT3*, *WipeOut Fusion* and the rest of the racing badasses on PS2, if you feel the need for speed there are videogames aplenty to satisfy those naughty boy racer urges.

Which brings us, like a convoluted bit of reverse parking, neatly to the subject of this very magazine. Racing games. By far the most popular genre in the history of gaming and easily the biggest in terms of game sales and games released on PS2. To celebrate these facts, we've reviewed every single racer available for Sony's black box (60 of 'em!), previewed all the gorgeous speed freaks - from *Colin McRae Rally 3* to *Auto Modellista* - currently revving up for release; completed *Gran Turismo 3* so we could bring you the massive, official drivethrough (page 114); and drove ourselves to distraction with huge features on the best racing games ever (page 86) and the Top Ten PS2 Vehicles (page 60).

If all that doesn't fill your speed quota, you're probably reading this from a prison cell having appeared on a recent episode of *Police, Camera, Christ, He's Riding An Exocet Missile Down The M1!* Stick to racing games Roger Ramjet, you know it makes sense.

Lee

LEE HART
Editor

ART EDITOR

ALVIN WEETMAN



A keen driver, Alvin cruises the streets, often in the dead of night - he was once stopped three times in a week 'cos the police thought he was a burglar from Plymouth. Supposedly, his dream car is an Audi TT. But we're sure that given the choice he'd rather ride a dirty old banger.

CONTRIBUTORS

KEITH STUART



For a man of many words, it's surprising that his own pride and joy is actually the tiny-named, tiny-car Ford Ka. He likes to drive it to B&Q on weekends and entertain the shoppers by purchasing extra large goods and hilariously pulling faces of frustration in the car park.

JEZ BRIDGEMAN



Being a descendant of Digby, Jez's new Labrador puppy has grown to enormous proportions, forcing him to trade in his Audi for something a bit more practical. He's recently been seen trawling the classifieds of *Hot Trucks Monthly*. He's also been looking for a bigger car...



■ GT CONCEPT: 2002
TOKYO-GENEVA

■ GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC

■ GT FORCE WHEELS



GT COMPETITION

Five supremely lucky readers can each win a copy of The Greatest Driving Simulation Ever™ Gran Turismo 3: A-spec, GT Concept: 2002 Tokyo-Geneva the slick new spin-off featuring a range of crazy/sexy/cool concept cars, and a GT Force steering wheel to play them with - by far the best, most responsive wheel peripheral on the market.

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with the subject
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Competition'. See
below for all the
comp rules.

QUESTION:

Who is the creator of the
Gran Turismo series?

1. Kazunori Yamauchi
2. Shinji Mikami
3. Hideo Kojima

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- No purchase necessary.
- No correspondence will be entered into.
- No employees of Future Publishing, game developer or any affiliated company may enter.
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- Multiple entries will be disregarded.
- The Editor's decision is final.
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QUICK SEARCH

A one-stop guide to every game featured in this issue.

■ Driving Sim ■ Arcade Racer ■ Offroad Racer
■ Futuristic Racer ■ Alternative Transport ■ Kart Racer

REVIEWS

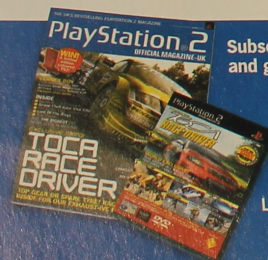
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REVIEWS



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DRIVING SIMULATIONS

All the in-depth engine tweakery and pinpoint handling you can erm, handle, courtesy of GT3, Le Mans 24, F1 2002 and co.



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ARCADE RACERS

High octane racing, from the Fall Guy antics of Stuntman to Burnout's traffic dodging and the chariot bashing of Circus Maximus.



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OFFROAD RACERS

Get low down and dirty with PS2's muddiest rally sims, 4x4 fests and offroad bikers. More filthy thrills than a weekend in Amsterdam.



PAGE 80-84

FUTURISTIC RACERS

Utopian jet craft thrills courtesy of Wipeout Fusion and its many wannabes. Oh, and Star Wars: Racer Revenge!



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ALTERNATIVE TRANSPORT

Pop out the oversized Oakley's for SSX Tricky, don a helmet for Moto GP 2, then slip into some sexy lycra for Le Tour De France. Ooh la la.



PAGE 106-109

KART RACERS

A treacle-coated lollipop of mini car mayhem. Go on, slurp the sweet juices of Wacky Races, Space Race and Super Bombad Racing.

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RUBBISH RACERS

Yes, it's the racing game scrap heap, where the dull, tired and ugly ones go to spend their last lonely days, boring each other to death.

FEATURES



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TOP TEN PS2 VEHICLES

The fastest, sexiest, coolest vehicles on PS2, introduced by our chubby libel-baiting speed expert Jimmy Clarkson! Do you get it?



PAGE 70-75

THE NEED FOR SPEED

An exhaustive genre-by-genre history of the racing game, covering all the most important, influential racers from Night Driver to GT.

REGULARS

008 ON THE DVD

Before you simply jam the thing into your console, why not read about the delights of our demo disc, which this month includes Stuntman, WRC, Wipeout Fusion and classic 'stealth driving game', Metal Gear Solid 2!

114 HARDWARE

Pass your driving test first time with our authoritative guides to GT3 and Crazy Taxi as well as codes, cheats and secrets!

130 NEXT ISSUE

Find out what we're up to in the next unmissable Special Edition.

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PREVIEWS



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COLIN McRAE RALLY 3

Codemasters has wrung out its muddy rallying license and promises to deliver the most intense, realistic simulation yet. Just check out the rain, for heaven's sake!



PAGE 18

AUTO MODELLISTA

At last, a driving game that aims not for dull realism but for cel-shaded manga cool. Find out why Capcom's driving debut could be the most innovative racer since Gran Turismo.

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THE GETAWAY

It's been 'getting away' for three years, but now we've caught this cockney crime caper.

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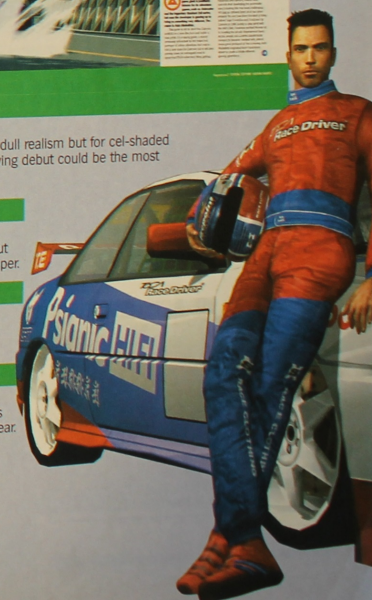
TOCA RACE DRIVER

The hugely-anticipated PS2 bow for Codemasters classic touring car series.

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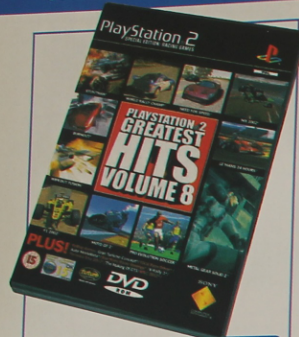
RELEASE ROUND-UP

All the other turbo-charged racing games coming to PS2 in the remainder of the year.



PlayStation 2

ON THE DVD



THIS ISSUE!

Other magazines let you watch, only PS2 lets you play. PlayStation 2 Greatest Hits Volume 8 features 11 fantastic playable demos plus seven video previews of PS2's hottest racers.

STUNTMAN

Be a stuntman without getting the bruises. Or the ladies.

WIPEOUT FUSION

Futuristic, techno-thrumping hovercar classic.

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

SCIE's superb, in-depth Colin McRae challenger.

METAL GEAR SOLID 2:

SONS OF LIBERTY

Take a break from the racing with Konami's stealth hit.

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER

...Or get sporty with the finest footy sim ever made.

BURNOUT

Traffic-dodging arcade racing nitro boosts onto PS2.

F1 2002

Speed, authenticity and stats. A petrolhead fantasy.

NEED FOR SPEED:

HOT PURSUIT 2

Avoid the cops in this ace chase-'em-up.

MOTOR GP 2

Updated superbike sim guaranteeing top gear thrills.

MX 2002

FEATURING RICKY CARMICHAEL

Get your leg over Ricky's sexy dirtbike.

LE MANS 24 HOURS

Fast cars, glamorous locations. Tres bien!

Plus! Seven videos...

Auto Modelling: World Rally Championship 2002, TOCA Race Driver, GT Concept 2002, Tokyo-Genova, V-Rally 3, Star Wars Racer Revenge and Inside GT3.

PLAYABLE DEMO ONE

STUNTMAN

Publisher: Atari Game type: Stunt sim Out: Now Players: 1

Driver goes to Hollywood. Take the heavy metal motors of Reflections' previous smash Driver and place in a stunningly original idea for a videogame. You are the stuntman in question and must steer a whole range of vehicles ranging from jeeps to three-wheeled tuk-tuks through, around and over film sets, pulling off synapse strumming stunts en route.

Miss your cue and you're on the dole queue. Go wide of the mark and your director will give you a wide berth. Crash and burn and your career will go up in flames.

THE DEMO

Once loaded, you can sit back and enjoy a rolling demo - featuring the game's best bits in a cavalcade of chaos - or, even better, engage a playable demo featuring a whole stunt from the game.

You're Dakota Scott and must drive a jeep in the movie *Scarab Of The Lost Souls*. Make your way through the Nazi garrison, hitting your markers and pulling off stunts as the on-screen guides direct. Go too slow, mangle your car or generally make a fool of yourself in front of the cameras and you'll have to go for take two, three, four, five...



Controls

THE CONTROLS
 L-Stick - Steer
 Left/Right - Accelerate/Brake
 R-Stick Up/Down - Accelerate/Brake
 Accelerate/Brake
 Accelerate
 Brake/reverse
 Handbrake
 Handbrake
 Horn
 Action button
 Right side view
 Left side view
 Pause game
 Toggle camera

PLAYABLE DEMO TWO

WIPEOUT FUSION

Publisher: SCEI Game type: Futuristic racer Out: Now Players: 1 (Full game 1-2)

The fourth in the WipeOut series but the first to appear on PS2, Fusion is one of console's most anticipated titles. It features 42 tracks of full 360° racing set across five incredibly detailed environments. Dizzily fast, furious and gorgeous to look at, WipeOut Fusion will be one of the must-have titles of 2002.

Controls

L-stick - Steer
 Right air brakes
 Left air brakes
 Change view

THE DEMO

Read the info screen then click twice to race. This demo features the game's new Zone mode, where your ship is propelled endlessly forward and you must steer it around the track through a series of 'zones'. If your shields deplete before you reach zone 30, your ship will explode. Make it and you'll earn a precious medal.



PLAYABLE DEMO THREE

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Publisher: SCEI Game type: Rally sim Out: Now Players: 1 (Full game 1-2)

Controls

L-stick - Steer
 Accelerate
 Brake
 Handbrake
 Change view
 Pause/Options

Evolution Studios' first venture into PS2 gaming is giving Codemasters and Mr McRae a run for their money. Set in 14 worldwide locations (including Monte Carlo, New Zealand and Britain) WRC features all the gritty realism of the event itself in terms of handling, sound and graphics while retaining the crucial playability of a great racing experience.

THE DEMO

After watching the Intro movie press to choose Time Trial. Another introductory sequence then appears and you can skip this with . Use and to choose either the snowy St. Pierre-Entrevaux stage at Monaco or El Condor in Argentina and again to hit the track. Get the best possible times and go for the in-car view if you dare!





PLAYABLE DEMO FOUR

METAL GEAR SOLID 2: SONS OF LIBERTY

Publisher: Konami Game type: Adventure Out: Now Players: 1 (Full game 1-4)

That's right, this ain't a racing game but we thought you might just appreciate a spot of cinematic, stealth adventuring between bouts of F1 action and motorcross madness. Hideo Kojima's follow-up to his PSone classic is one of PS2's bestselling and, indeed, best games. Get stuck in and find out what all the fuss is about.

THE DEMO

Once loaded, choose either 'New Game' or 'Special' with $\uparrow/\downarrow$ and $\odot$. Selecting 'Special'

takes you through a guide to Snake's moves and abilities, complete with video footage of each. Choosing 'New Game' will take you to the Difficulty Select screen, so pick your setting with $\uparrow/\downarrow$ and $\odot$. Next, select your radar with $\uparrow/\downarrow$ and $\odot$ again to begin the game. Watch the intro sequence and listen to Otacon for your mission objectives, then it's time for some Solid Snake action! Your first task is to get to the ship's bridge and the showdown with Olga, but we'll leave the rest for you to discover.



Controls

- L-stick - Movement (Normal view mode)/Camera movement (First-person view mode)
- R-stick - Change camera angle (corner view mode)
- $\odot$ - Crawl/Cancel
- $\odot$ - Punch/Confirm
- $\odot$ - Knock
- $\odot$ - Weapon or Throw/Choke (when no weapon equipped)
- $\odot$ - Action
- $\odot$ - First-person view
- $\odot$ - Lock-on
- $\odot$ - Equip weapon/Peek right (corner view)
- $\odot$ - Equip item/Peek left (corner view)
- $\odot$ - Pause
- $\odot$ - Enter Codec mode



PLAYABLE DEMO FIVE

PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER

Publisher: Konami Game type: Football simulation Out: Now Players: 1-2 (Full game 1-8)

The second non-racer in our selection. Like football? Course you do. And if you haven't played it already, you're going to love Pro Evolution Soccer. The first PS2 release in Konami's ISS Pro Evolution series - which has been topping the PSone footy table for years - this is the best football game we've ever played. So realistic you can almost feel the draught from a Keano sliding tackle. PES really is the 'beautiful game'.

THE DEMO

Our fantastic two-player demo lets you play the first half of a match between a choice of five teams: England, Germany, Spain, France or Italy. Once the demo has loaded, press $\triangle$ and select 'Match Mode' with $\odot$, then choose 'National Teams' and make your selection with $\leftarrow/\rightarrow$ and $\odot$. Choose between the available strips, then set your difficulty level - you can obviously raise this as you get more confident - and pick a stadium with $\uparrow/\downarrow$ and $\odot$. Set up your team as desired at the next screen, then go to 'Start Match' to get stuck in!



PLAYABLE DEMO SIX

BURNOUT

Publisher: Acclaim Game type: Racer Out: Now Players: 1 (Full game 1-2)

Heading back to classic coin-op racers like Sega's OutRun and Daytona USA, Burnout is arcade racing to the core. Taking in various European and US locations across its 14 courses, Burnout features insanely fast vehicles, against the clock racing, traffic-heavy city streets and, therefore, constant breathtaking crashes. All of which adds up to one of the most thrilling PS2 driving experiences to date.

THE DEMO

After loading, hit $\triangle$ to get straight into the action. Our demo features the River City course and puts you in charge of a lovely shiny red Sports Coupe AT, so just hit the gas and hold onto your underpants. You're up against three other cars and you must reach the checkpoints before the timer runs down. Build up your Burnout meter by driving heading into traffic or dangerously close to other vehicles, and then trigger it for a mind-meltingly fast burst of speed.

Controls

- L-stick - Steer
- $\odot$ - Accelerate
- $\odot$ - Brake
- $\odot$ - Change view
- $\odot$ - Rear view
- $\odot$ - Hold Burnout
- $\odot$ - Pause/Quit



PLAYABLE DEMO EIGHT



NEED FOR SPEED: HOT PURSUIT 2

Publisher: EA Games Game type: Racer Out: September Players: 1 (full game 1-2)

Controls

- L-stick - Steer left/right
- R-stick - No function
- $\odot$ - Accelerate
- $\odot$ - Brake
- $\odot$ - Horn
- $\odot$ - Change view
- $\odot$ - Look back
- $\odot$ - E-brake
- $\odot$ - Zone zoom
- $\odot$ - Zone freeze
- $\odot$ - Pause game
- $\odot$ - HUD change

Ferrari, Porsche, Lamborghini... just some of the 20 high-class motors beckoning for naughty police - evading action in this, the latest in EA's exotic supercar racing series. A honking great silver cup and an oversized Moët & Chandon bottle oozing suggestive froth may not be your goal, but the road to Champion Road Racer remains as challenging as ever. With over 60 racing events to compete in, and top speeds of 160mph, your streamlined machine must navigate in between traffic and avoid the fuzz if you're to snaffle the winning wreath with a twinkle in your eye rather than a face-full of burning metal.

THE DEMO

This tantalising five-minute teaser invites you to roar through the National Forest in a Lamborghini Diablo 6.0 V12, searching for second-shaving short-cuts and attempting to evade the attention of kill-joy cops. Just make sure you keep a tissue handy to wipe away the speed-induced, anti-blink tears.

ON THE DVD

PLAYABLE DEMO SEVEN

F1 2002

Publisher: EA Game type: Racer Out: Now Players: 1 (Full game 1-4)

Boasting all the teams and drivers of the 2002 season, F1 2002 is the most up-to-date Formula 1 experience to be had on PS2. Rather than throwing players straight into a demanding F1 season, EA's latest presents a series of Gran Turismo-style driving tests that must be passed in order to graduate to the race proper. With both normal and simulation modes offering driving conditions to suit your level of skill, plus the usual array of tweaks and modifications we've come to expect from F1 sims, F1 2002 is any motorsport fanatic's dream come true.

THE DEMO

Once loaded, press $\triangle$ to select your language, then $\odot$ again at the next screen to choose 'Quick Race'. Use $\uparrow/\downarrow$ to select your car and driver from the available teams of Ferrari, Toyota or Renault, then hit $\odot$ to begin the race. Our demo features the famous Monza circuit at Milan, and gives you three dizzyingly fast minutes to make your way through the pack and get as far as you can.

Controls

- L-stick - Steer
- R-stick Up/Down - Accelerate/Brake
- $\odot$ - Accelerate (Select highlighted option/action)
- $\odot$ - Brake
- $\odot$ - Reverse
- $\odot$ - Instant replay/Return to previous screen
- $\odot$ - Toggle camera angles
- $\odot$ - Rear view
- $\odot$ - Gear up (semi-automatic transmission)
- $\odot$ - Gear down (semi-automatic transmission)
- $\odot$ - Pause



PLAYABLE DEMO NINE

MOTO GP 2

Publisher: SCEE Game type: Motorbike sim Out: Now Players: 1 (Full game 1-2)

Controls

- L-stick - Steer
- $\odot$ - Accelerate
- $\odot$ - Brake
- $\odot$ - Change view
- $\odot$ - Action
- $\odot$ - Change display

Namco's rock-hard motorbike sim is back for a second PS2 outing and it's just as gritty as the first installment. Fans will be pleased to know that all the high-speed thrills of the original are intact plus extra teams, updated rider data, a wheelie-popping Action Button, a hard as nails Challenge mode plus a Legends mode, that allows you to ride against some of the all-time greats.

THE DEMO

Once loaded, press $\triangle$ to begin the game. Our demo features a choice of two one-lap races, so use $\leftarrow/\rightarrow$ and $\odot$ to select one. If you choose Assen, the weather is sunny but selecting Suzuka will put you on a slippery track in the heavy rain. Change the view to first-person for one of the most thrilling races you'll ever experience.





PLAYABLE DEMO TEN MX 2002 FEATURING RICKY CARMICHAEL

Controls

L-Stick - Steer
R-Stick - Accelerate/brake
○ Accelerate
○ Brake
○ Powerslide
○ Clutch
○ or ○ Preload
Stunt (in combination other buttons)
○ and ○ Low jump (tap at takeoff)
○ (simultaneously) Bail

Publisher: THQ **Game type:** Extreme sports **Out Now** **Players:** 1-2

The king of dirt biking Ricky Carmichael debuts on PS2 with MX 2002. The full game sports over 20 tracks, a Create-A-Biker facility, Career mode, Freestyle mode, Challenge mode and an impressive array of stunts. Everything a dirt bike fanatic could wish for essentially.

THE DEMO

Once loaded, press **○** and you're presented with several modes of play, which can be selected with **↑/↓** and **○**. Single-player race and Freestyle modes are available, with tracks located at Kenworthy and San Diego



respectively. Choosing head-to-head race allows two players to race two laps at Kenworthy while opting for head-to-head Freestyle lets you both take part in a timed contest at San Diego to see who can get the highest stunt score.

PLAYABLE DEMO ELEVEN

LE MANS 24 HOURS

Controls

L-Stick - Steer car
○ Accelerate
○ Change camera
○ Look behind
○ Brake
○ Gear down (manual transmission)
○ Gear up

The superb *Le Mans 24 Hours* captures the thrills, glamour and pressure sores of this automotive marathon. Beautifully realised with plenty of blinding unlockable cars and modes to cater for all gameplay tastes, this is a racing game that comes into its own as the light fades and darkness envelopes the track.

THE DEMO

Drive one of six cars around the Suzuka East track. Once you've loaded the demo, select Quick Race and you'll be whisked to the Race Set Up menu. Ignore the option to 'Go Race' for now and enter the Set Up options.

Now you can choose your car. You have a choice of two models each from the GT, Open Prototype and Closed Prototype classes. Once you've made your choice and selected transmission, you'll set difficulty levels for both you and the other drivers. Finish here, confirm the track as Suzuka East and you're off. Once you've finished you may press **○** or wait for the replay. When you're done the PS2 will reset, but you can play the demo as many times as you like.



ON THE DVD

Talk to us!

If you have problems with your DVD, pop it in an envelope and send it to the following address. We'll test it and, if faulty, send you out a new one. Write to us at Official PlayStation 2 Magazine, Disc Returns, Customer Services, Future Publishing, Cary Court, Bancombe Road Industrial Estate, Somerton, Somerset TA11 6TB.

*Remember, this DVD will only work on a PS2.

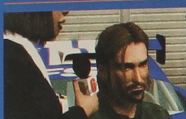
video previews

An enticing glimpse of even more PS2 racing stars..



VIDEO ONE AUTO MODELLISTA

Publisher: Capcom
Capcom's col-shaded racer is still some way from completion, but it's already causing excitement in the PS2 office. Watch this video to see what's getting us hot under the bonnet.



VIDEO THREE TOCA RACE DRIVER

Publisher: Codemasters
This latest trailer direct from Codemasters highlights exactly why we can't wait for Toca Sublime looks combined with classic touring cars gameplay. Oh, and the added bonus of a genuine character-driven storyline!



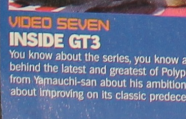
VIDEO FIVE V-RALLY 3

Publisher: Infogrames
Eden Studios' latest V-Rally incarnation is in the shops now, and no doubt hopes to give World Rally Championship and Colin McRae a mud-splattered run for their money. Check out this latest trailer then read the extensive review on page 070.



VIDEO SIX STAR WARS: RACER REVENGE

Publisher: Activision
Set eight years after Episode I, Racer Revenge pits Anakin against old rival Sebulba in the dangerous world of pod racing. This is bigger, better and faster than previous Star Wars videogames. Just watch the video, young Padawan.



VIDEO SEVEN INSIDE GT3

You know about the series, you know about the music. Now it's time to hear the story behind the latest and greatest of Polyphony Digital's driving sims, GT3: A-spec. Hear from Yamauchi-san about his ambitions for the game and how he and his team went about improving on its classic predecessors.



VIDEO TWO WRC 2002

Publisher: SCE
The only rally game with all the drivers and tracks of the genuine WRC event. Here we see men driving like demons, fogging cars more used to carrying the kids and shopping home.



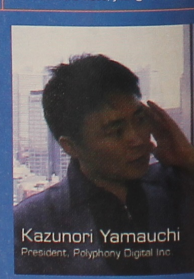
VIDEO FOUR GT CONCEPT 2002: TOKYO-GENEVA

Publisher: SCE
We're finally getting the Euro release of this concept car GT3 update, complete with updated cars (shown off at the Geneva Motor Show) for the European market. Enjoy this all-new trailer.

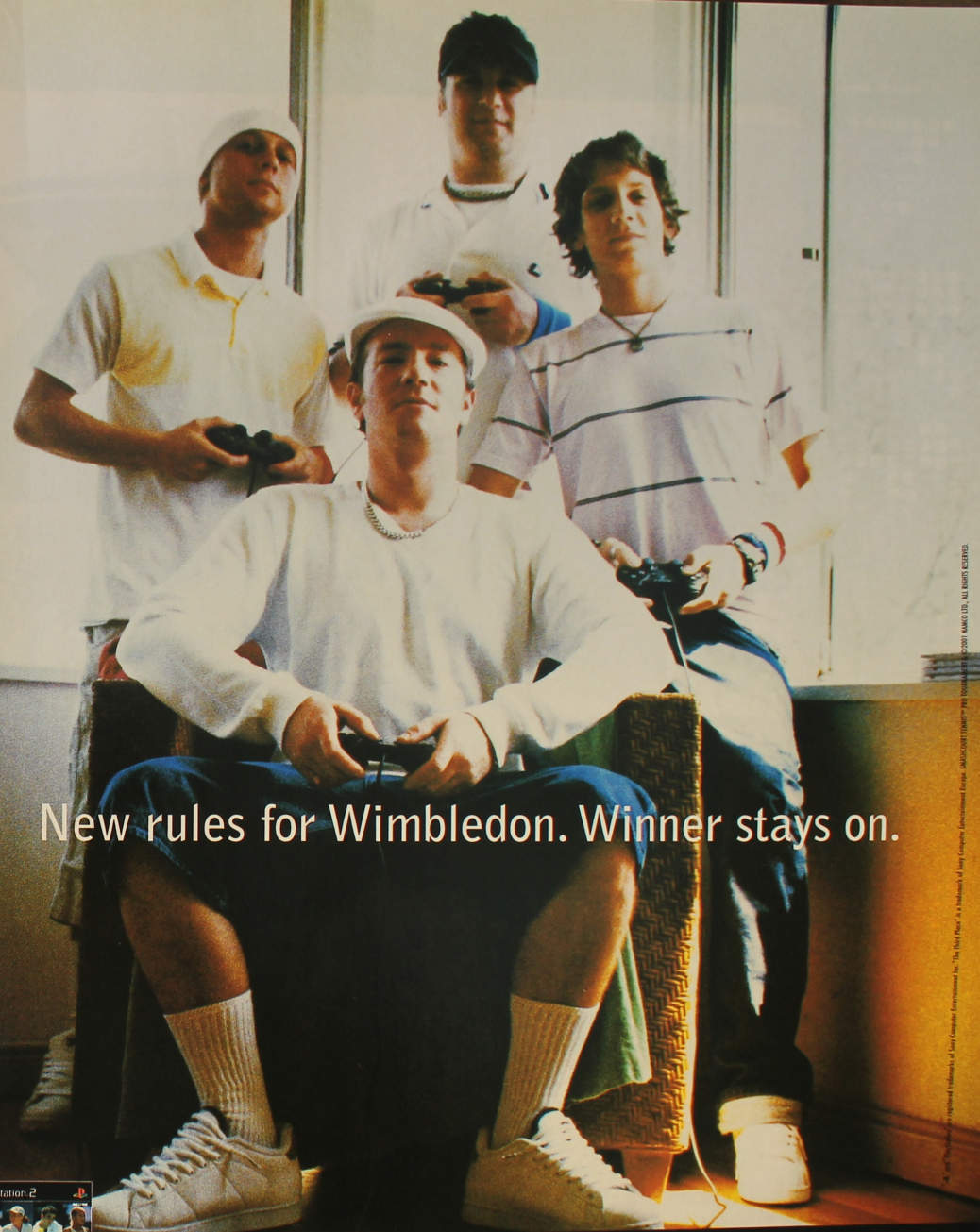


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Kazunori Yamauchi
President, Polyphony Digital Inc.



New rules for Wimbledon. Winner stays on.



namco

There's a new breed of rowdy, argumentative tennis players on the international circuit. You and your mates. Choose from 8 of the world's top players for singles or even doubles if you pick up a multi-tap. No clothing policy, no court fees, and you can't even get rained off.

WIMBLEDON
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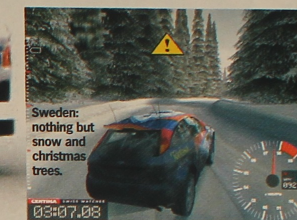
PlayStation 2
THE THIRD PLACE



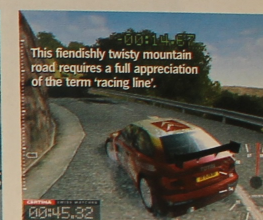
TEXT: KEITH STUART



The ever-exciting Lancia Prisma is one of the initially selectable vehicles in Quick Start mode. As usual, the engine performance and handling are based on real data.

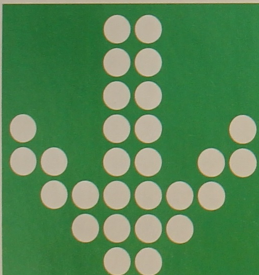


Sweden: nothing but snow and christmas trees.



This fiendishly twisty mountain road requires a full appreciation of the term 'racing line'.

COLIN McRAE RALLY 3



QUICK SEARCH

From ultra-realistic rallying to cockney gangster malarkey, we're road testing the most exciting hi-spec racers on the release schedule car lot. Clamber in and breathe up that new car aroma!

P 014 COLIN McRAE RALLY 3

Codemasters returns with the world's most respected rally sim series. So realistic, you might want to take out life insurance.

P 018 AUTO MODELLISTA

Stunningly original visuals combine with cool cars and manga atmospherics in Capcom's incredibly promising debut racer.

P 024 THE GETAWAY

The long-awaited 'gangster action driving game' is creeping ever nearer. Check out the latest news on the project and gasp at those London settings.

P 028 TOCA RACE DRIVER

Another ace driving series from Codemasters, brought stunningly up to date. Gut-wrenching pile-ups and new story elements are on the touring car menu.

P 032 RELEASE ROUND UP

A smorgasbord of forthcoming racers, including World Rally Championship 2002, Burnout 2 and top Sega hardcore driving sim F355 Challenge.



Achieving the perfect combo of speed and skid into the bends is the key to success in this game.

Rally game pretenders have flooded the country recently but now the Focus-driving Scot is back to reclaim his mud-splattered crown. This is, quite literally, going to get messy...

- Publisher: Codemasters
- Developer: Codemasters
- Players: 1-2
- Release: September



Raindrops the size of marrowfat peas batter the windscreen. The wipers are on full power, but with every pass, huge arc-shaped smears spread across the glass, obscuring the road ahead. This would be okay on a rainy afternoon drive back from the shops. But this is a Ford Focus RS WRC travelling at 80mph toward a tight left turn lurking somewhere behind the drooping branches of several enormous trees. This is the level of realism Colin McRae Rally 3 is shooting for. You'll just have to hope the screen clears at just the right moment and that, somehow, the corner will suddenly appear through the mist.

In 1999, Colin McRae Rally took the console rallying sim to a new level. Instead of just transporting normal arcade-style racing to a slightly muddier selection of tracks (à la Sega Rally) Codemasters bravely built the game around the time-trial nature of the real sport. You wouldn't be racing five other cars on a wide dirt track, you would be going up against a series of devilishly twisty circuits with only the stopwatch to beat. And at the end of every stage, there was a realistic pitstop where players did what they could to patch up their battered car before the next phase. The risk paid off - McRae became the most successful, and most respected, rally sim on PSone.

With the first PS2 incarnation in the series, you might expect Codemasters to play it safe and stick with the same formula. Instead, the game designers have spent the last year trudging around the world shadowing the Ford team, interviewing

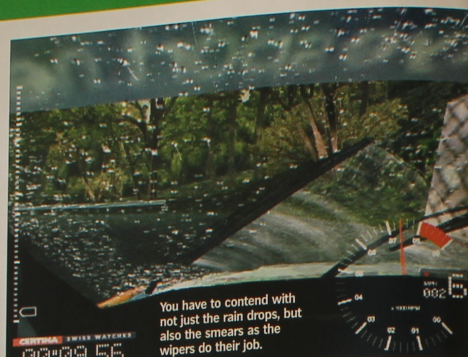
//Every single detail plays its part in getting you into the head of a professional rally driver//

engineers, watching McRae and his co-driver between stages, picking up on the vibe. What they've discovered is that there's a helluva lot more to rallying than just driving. The teamwork, the preparation, the tension between stages – all elements missing from the average rally sim. But not from Colin McRae Rally 3.

The main play option (Codemasters refers to it as "the heart of the game") is the gruelling Championship mode. In this unflinchingly accurate experience you compete as Colin McRae through three successive World Championships. There's no getting thrown out of the game if you fail to stay in, say, the top six (unless you're sacked of course). You have to complete a set amount of rallies a year, whether you're at the top of the heap or ailing at the bottom. There are even plans to restrict the number of re-start points available to the unsuccessful competitor. They want you to suffer. It's all part of the experience.

IN-GAME MECHANICS

Also part of the experience are the opening periods of technical tweaking and between stages. In Colin McRae 3 each rally starts with a view of the service area. You see the engineers preparing your car for the specific terrain and conditions ahead. You can see your co-driver relaxing nearby, and petrol-head spectators gathered at the periphery. Ironically, to add to the realism, you no longer have to tweak your own car between each rally and each stage – as in the true sport, the engineers are paid to do that for you (and besides, market research revealed that most gamers are completely turned off by the pre-race fiddling). You can intervene if you like, but most will be willing to leave the techy stuff to the Ford crew.



Kicking up the dust cloud effects in Australia. Looks great doesn't it?

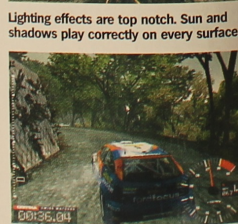
THE QUICK ALTERNATIVE

No time for the full Championship mode experience? Why not try one of these modes instead.



1. Split-Screen Mode
Pits you and a mate simultaneously against each other's times – a nice little extra for those who are desperate for versus action.

2. Quick Start Mode
Providing fast, easy access to a range of cars and courses, for one or two players.



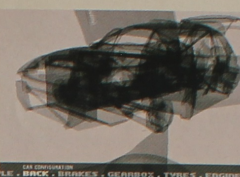
Apparently, the handling is so accurate, this is essentially a Focus simulator.

"AND GIVE THE WINDSCREEN A WIPE WHILE YOU'RE AT IT..."

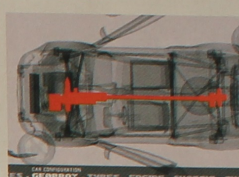
Codemasters has made a feature out of the behind-the-scenes side of rally driving in an attempt to capture the whole atmosphere of the championship. Here are some of the scenes mechanic fanatics can look out for.



The Service Area
Here you can watch engineers beavering away on your motor.



Climb Under The Car...
Don't trust the men in the overalls? Just hit [X] and you get an x-ray of your car...



...And Have A Fiddle
... Now you simply choose the area you want to tweak and make the necessary adjustments.



That Pre-Race Atmosphere
You can then watch as your Ford drives down to that fateful starting position.

From here, an animated sequence shows you driving down to the rally start. The car in front heads off, then you move up to take your place. As well as these introductory CGIs you get checkpoint and end-stage animated sequences. Before each new event you also take part in the shakedown day – a chance to practice on similar terrain to the forthcoming challenge.

Every detail plays its part in getting you into the head of a professional rally driver. Even the countdown clock is included as part of the scenery, rather than a disembodied prompt. Codemasters wants to keep the scene as real as possible.

Of course, this ambition extends to the circuits themselves. There is some quite breathtaking visual detail in Colin McRae 3 even by today's skyrocketing standards. Sliding off the road in the UK stages has you churning up grass, spraying chunks of mud and leaving long, slick, muddy furrows in your wake. A bit of wheel spin on the dirt tracks of Australia soon sees a storm cloud of red dust billow up from beneath your car – spin round and you can watch the cloud rise, hang like a pinkish fog and then slowly dissipate into the ether. The lighting is beautiful, too. What must be state-of-the-art environment mapping sprays gorgeous scenic reflections across the bonnet and roof, the sun glints off the windows, and as the rally goes on, dirt begins to cake the lower chassis.

And of course, the cars themselves are beautifully modelled. Codemasters claims that Colin McRae 20 used around 800 polys per car, whereas Colin McRae 3 has 13,000 – a staggering figure. Each is a perfect re-production, from every curve and contour down to the clear, crisply textured livery. In Championship mode you are restricted to McRae's 2002 Ford Focus RS WRC, but there are several other modern and classic models in the Quick Start mode, including the Mitsubishi Lancer Evo VII, Subaru Impreza WRX 44S, Ford RS200 and Lancia



037 While the programmers have had most input from the Ford team, the handling physics of each vehicle have apparently been intricately replicated.

RALLY GOOD FUN

And the handling – even at the early preview stage – is pure, unadulterated Colin McRae: totally realistic, yet also magnificently skittish and hair-raising. At the moment, the cars feel lighter than in

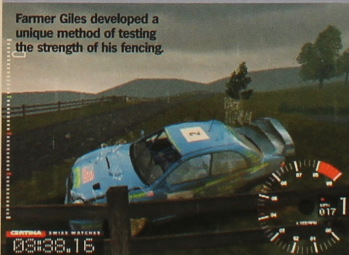
previous incarnations of the series, and there appears to be less friction between tyre and surface than we are used to. This, no doubt, will be tweaked. In any case, there seems to be oceans of depth in the driving model. We were, for example, able to experience how road conditions are going to affect the driving. The rain is both visually astounding and a real test of concentration. Snow, too, billows into the road, causing real vision and grip problems. Then there are the different surfaces. The game travels through Japan, Spain, Finland, UK and Australia and these feature Tarmac, dirt and loose gravel tracks – all of which have noticeably different effects on cornering.

So Codemasters has taken another significant step into uncharted territory. The Colin McRae 3 Championship mode is admirably hardcore, doing away with the concessions usually made to impatient players. If *Gran Turismo* – with its obsessive car collecting – is the RPG of the driving game, Colin McRae 3 appears to be the third-person action adventure. It's an emotional journey. A driving quest. And it will be interesting to see if gamers can adapt themselves to this new system. A system that requires considerable time and dedication that perhaps gets closer than anything else to the physical and mental demands of the sport. Whatever happens, this is boundary-pushing stuff. ■

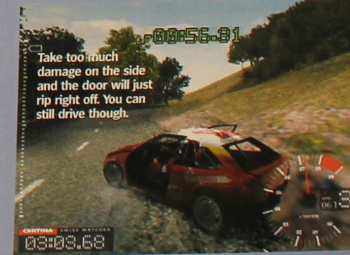
CRASH, BANG, WALLOP!

Check out the spectacular Colin McRae 3 vehicle damage.

Most external components – including tailgates, doors, bonnets and bumpers – are damageable and, at the extreme, detachable. Take too many knocks on the side and the door starts swinging open on every curve revealing the wonderful modelling on the driver and co-driver (the McRae figure drives realistically using pedals, steering wheel and gear stick. Co-driver Nicky Grist grabs the roll bar on hairier corners). You also get moments where the bonnet flies up, or where the whole tailgate rips off on one side so that it snaps up and down grotesquely with every bump in the road.



Farmer Giles developed a unique method of testing the strength of his fencing.



Take too much damage on the side and the door will just rip right off. You can still drive though.



TEXT: AMOS WONG



Auto Modellista is aiming for the middle ground between Ridge Racer's arcade action and Gran Turismo's hardcore simulation.



All the cars used in the game are heavily-stylised version of actual motors.

AUTO MODELLISTA



Auto Modellista looks unlike any driving game you've played. It's also heading up PS2's online ambitions. We visited Capcom's studios to meet the developers who are racing against the grain.

- Publisher: Capcom Eurosoft
- Players: 1-8
- Developer: Capcom
- Release: November

Things are changing at Capcom. The Japanese game giant is justifiably famous for its adventure games, such as *Onimusha* and the legendary *Resident Evil* series, but now the developer is gearing up to bring us something very different. The name is *Auto Modellista*.

This game is set to steer the Capcom portfolio in a new direction and tackle a new genre. It's a racing game, a theme previously untouched by the respected purveyor of action adventure. Not only is this a new route for Capcom, but it will take gaming down an unmapped road to spearhead PS2's networked titles, getting

online even before *Gran Turismo*. It's also out to buck the trend of its peers who feel compelled to create increasingly photorealistic graphics.

At Capcom's monolithic marble and glass Research & Development building in Osaka, the game's Producer, Noritaka Funamizu, and Director, Makoto Ishii, concede that developing the potentially epoch-making title has been challenging. "It's just so different from all of our other projects. No-one has done this kind of thing before," says Funamizu-san. Employed by Capcom in 1985 purely to play sport with the R&D chief, Funamizu worked his way up to heading the arcade development team. As the arcade and console departments merged, he became involved with almost every game produced at the company. Auto Modellista originated from Funamizu's desire to create a totally different gaming experience.





The development team visited the Suzuka Circuit to familiarise themselves with high-performance vehicles.



The game aims to give races the exaggerated visual style that sims like GT3 can't provide.

//This racer will take gaming down an unmapped road to spearhead PS2's networked titles//



You'll be able to decorate your own car!

DEMOLITION DERBY

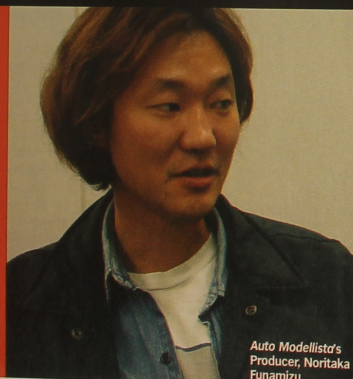
If it's stylised, it's not exactly 'real', right? With that in mind, PS2 asks Funamizu and Ishii the million dollar question: Will there be collision damage for the cars?

Funamizu: "We'd love to be able to do it!"

Ishii: "We tried to reproduce damage visually, but some of the car manufacturers would not allow it. They have their own rules, so we had no choice but to comply with their wishes."

Funamizu: "The strictest manufacturer began with an 'H'. And you can't afford to not have its cars in a racing game, because they're huge."

Ishii: "The policies of car manufacturers are so different from one to the other. Some say that you could shoot missiles and blow the cars up if you wanted to while others say you can't put a scratch on them. One of the things we wanted to do online was to have a car sim mini-game, put a lot of contestants into a small, restricted space and have them try to smash each other out. We thought it would get players excited, but we had to give up on that one!"



Auto Modellista's Producer, Noritaka Funamizu.

TALK OF THE TOON

Just from a glance at the early screens and artwork in this preview, it's clear that his wish is well on its way to being granted. Taking on a Pop Art approach to graphics, the game has an exaggerated reality and comic book feel. "In 2D art, you can easily tell the style and work of a certain artist at a glance," Funamizu explains. "What we're trying to achieve is that same artistic quality with 3D art, which is why we gave the game its name." The racer's vibrant cel shaded presentation, complete with stylised effects, unforgettably etches itself into your memory at first sight. This isn't just another title that blends into an arguably saturated market. Coupled with the exciting online possibilities, it is set to evolve the racing genre and provide a fresh, new experience.

To realise this goal and distinguish Auto Modellista's visuals from the current competition, Funamizu wanted to use cel shaded graphics from the outset, but it took a lot to convince the development team that this was the way forward. "I had a lot of opposing opinion, perhaps because, at the time, the technique was so new," he says candidly. When Funamizu saw the first rough image of the graphics however, he knew that he could make it work. While cel shading has become the vogue among

many developers of late, the results have often lacked a certain graphic finesse. In order to fully capture the nuance of the racing cars, Ishii and the R&D team ended up developing and patenting a new technique dubbed Arttoon.

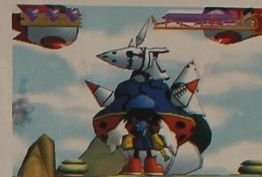
SCALING THE HEIGHTS

Stressing the importance of artistry in game design, Funamizu moves on to opine that while being a racing fan isn't an absolute necessity as a designer, players can tell whether or not the vehicles have been created by a bona fide car enthusiast. Fortunately, Auto Modellista's team are nothing less. "They're just so into it," laughs Funamizu. In order to recreate the licensed cars, an unorthodox approach was taken to model them; the team visited renowned model maker Tamiya. Funamizu enthuses: "Those guys are great at miniaturising cars. Say there's a very fine line on a car that defines it, if you reproduce the whole vehicle by pure calculation it will look wrong to the eye, even though it's technically correct. When scaling the cars down you have to inject some artistic licence."

Further research involved Ishii-san sending the team onto the streets of Tokyo and also onto the Suzuka Circuit to sketch cars in order to familiarise themselves with handling the linework. "We also did a lot of hobby racing among ourselves, using low, lightweight 500cc cars," says Ishii. "We bought cheap used cars and filmed them racing on dirt courses, because if you drift

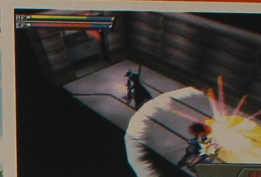
'TOON TECHNIQUE

Cel shading essentially substitutes the smooth, shaded tones playing across a 3D object's surface with flat areas, mimicking the shadow and lighting techniques used to create characters in traditional 2D animation. A black outline completes the image. Also known as Toon Shading, the effect was an innovative standout in Sega's Dreamcast classic Jet Set Radio, and has since become increasingly popular among gamers for its unique look. Other cel shaded games on PlayStation 2 include:



KLONOA 2: LUNATEA'S VEIL (Namco)

Sublime platformer packed with gorgeous environments and addictive gameplay. Cel shading: In a word? Sublime. The characters are adorable.



DNA (Hudsonsoft)

Mentally taxing futuristic adventure, where the trench-coated hero resembles a manga version of the protagonist of Frank Miller's Sin City. Cel shading: A tad on the chunky side.



FUR FIGHTERS (Bizarre Creations)

They may be cute and fluffy, but the heroes of this shooter are perfectly capable of dishing out some serious damage. Cel shading: A Hawaiian shirt-wearing kangaroo armed to the teeth? Love it!



Ah, the Subaru Impreza. It's gorgeous lines are based on the real thing, as well as the Tamiya scale models.

and skid around these, the cars kick up a lot of smoke, dirt and dust. We could refer to them later when working on the various effects in the game."

POLE POSITION

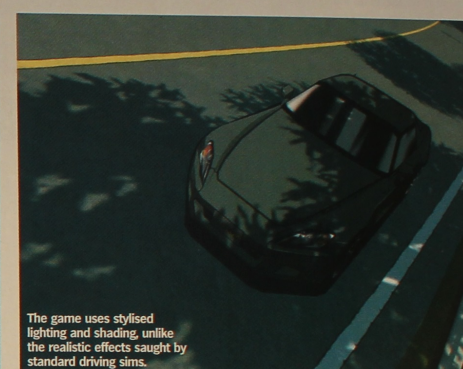
AM's exaggerated effects take their cues from anime. For example, 'speedlines' are used to accentuate the dynamics during high acceleration. Further to this, skidding tyres are accompanied by abstract jaggy graphics trailing behind the cars, while contact with competitors will issue sparks and a rumble via the Joypad. Lens flare from the sun, and from the headlights reflecting off rain droplets, will also feature but the pair say the effect will be totally different to its equivalent in GT3. Funamizu believes that in the racing genre, there are two types of popular game: simulation (Gran Turismo) and arcade (Ridge Racer). Observing that Namco's series seemed to be struggling to maintain its position of late, he saw a chance to steal the space. In order to accomplish this, Ishii then interjects that Auto Modellista will lean towards a sim style but, at the same time, have more of a 'game flavour' than Gran Turismo 3. "Say you speed along a race track or a steep mountain course and videotape your driving," he suggests. "While you're doing this, you may have a certain image of your



// "You'll feel as if you own the car because you can decorate it to your own taste," Director, Ishii-san//

driving performance that's often different from the actual footage when you watch it. In your mind, you tend to exaggerate what you're doing to make yourself look cooler than you are. What we're trying to do with this game is to reproduce that exaggerated image, to give players the sense of satisfaction of being a great, cool driver."

The gameplay structure is largely what you'd expect from a racer, complete with CPU opponents and unlockable vehicles. Seven courses will be available across a mix of circuits, mountain courses and cities, though the details of the tracks are yet to be finalised. Ishii stresses that what



The game uses stylised lighting and shading, unlike the realistic effects sought by standard driving sims.



Auto Modellista's online play will allow up to eight players to race each other at any time. And if you just like to watch, you can 'sit' in another racer's passenger seat and see the action from there.



makes this racer stand out are the customisation possibilities. "In short, you have the ultimate freedom. You'll feel as if you actually own the cars because you can decorate them to your own taste. You can create original stickers with an in-game paint program."

Without going into specifics, the pair promise a wealth of cosmetic parts found in the real car market "to make your car more aerodynamic." Performance upgrades will also be available and great care is going into deciding what will be offered. The developers have taken into account that not all gamers are hardcore racing fans. The enhancements will therefore be more exaggerated than those in GT3, for example. Ishii explains that, "by changing certain parts, you'll be able to tell immediately if the car's performance has been improved."

As if all this wasn't enough to get gamers excited, *Auto Modellista*'s online gameplay is where the fun really starts. "We view offline play as preparation, like when you change your clothes and check how you look before you go out. When you feel 100 percent ready, that's when you go online to show off your car and skills." Networked play will act like a virtual race meet: players can talk shop and boast about their car's custom enhancements. Fans of a particular car will be able to form a community, hold meetings and compete against other car fan groups. A total of eight challengers can compete in an online race, while others can participate as spectators. Should a particular car's performance pique your interest, spectators can experience the race first-hand by riding in the passenger seat. Although this feature is yet to be finalised, extra background music, as well as extra elements not on the DVD, may be downloadable to the Hard Disc Drive.

NET WORTH?

When asked how the game will connect to the Network, Funamizu tells us that it hasn't been decided yet. Currently, in Japan, the massively popular *Capcom Vs SNK 2* and *Gundam: Federation Vs Zion DX* utilise the



Who said cel shading was just for cute platformers?

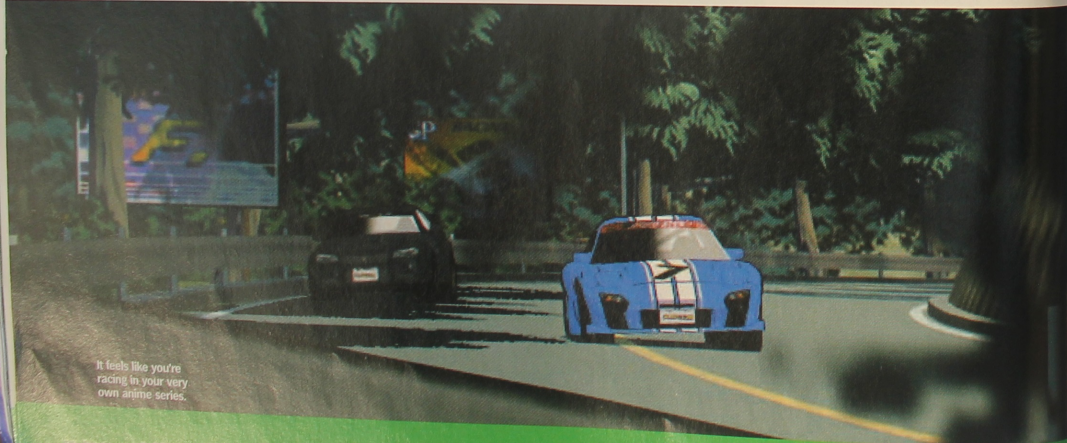
//Spectators can opt to experience the race first-hand by taking a ride in the passenger seat//

KDDI Multi Matching Service via a 56k modem (KDDI is a telephone company in Japan which is providing a dedicated service to link up Capcom's networked games via a 56k modem). "Broadband is coming soon. We don't know all the details yet, so we can't definitely say which way we're going to go." Technically though, the 56k service ought to be able to handle *Auto Modellista* gameplay if broadband networks experience teething problems. Before final decisions are made about AM's online future, the team is still busy working on the graphics. Funamizu and Ishii consider the game to be around 20 percent complete. "The environment isn't completely created using Artistoon yet," states Funamizu. "The game's graphics need to be evaluated as a whole: the cars, the environments, all the effects. Until you can see all the elements in

place, you can't really judge it."

Previously, a forthright member of the gaming press remarked that what the team was doing with *Auto Modellista* was too risky and reckless. The pair didn't take the comment to heart. "Maybe in a way, he was right," Funamizu laughs - he views their risk-taking as very much a positive thing.

If we imagine the ultimate evolution of the driving game as one where reality is mimicked to perfection and replays are indistinguishable from a live broadcast, is this really what gamers want? Innovation always involves an element of risk, but the chances are Funamizu's ambitious project will turn heads and claim admirers upon its arrival in the Autumn. It's already giving the racing genre a welcome shot of character. But then again, that's what Capcom's been doing to the videogame world for years. ■



It feels like you're racing in your very own anime series.

THE BATTLE TO SAVE THE WORLD IS TOO MUCH FOR ONE MAN



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PlayStation 2
THE THIRD PLACE

THEIR DESTINY IS IN YOUR HANDS.

THE GETAWAY

TEXT: GEORGE WALTER

Photographing 70 square miles of London was just the first challenge for Team SoHo. The second was to make a gangster sim out of it. And the third was to make people believe it was real...

- Publisher: SCEE
- Developer: Team SoHo
- Players: 1
- Release: October



"It was difficult to explain to the management that The Getaway was going to be a year late," reflects Writer and Director

Brendan McNamara. "It was never going to be a fun meeting. Luckily, everyone's stuck with us for the ride." And what a ride it's been. Starting back in August 1999, McNamara's SCEE development team set itself an ambitious task – to recreate 70 square miles of central London for use in a filmic gangster crime sim. Following two different characters through the crime-addled city streets, the plot would lead players into the seedy underworld of gangland London, and include encounters with the infamous Triads, East End mobsters and the Yards. Play would consist of on-foot shooting and exploring, plus perilous car chases through the streets of the capital. Of course, such huge

plans would mean the game would require a lot of cash, a lot of manpower and a whole lot of time. Unfortunately, no-one knew just how much time.

SOME BACK STORY

The story behind how Team SoHo achieved this has become the stuff of videogame folklore. A team of artists set out with digital cameras and, quite literally, took photos of every building in their chosen area. These images were then pasted onto the front of virtual structures identical in scale to their real-life counterparts. Starting with Piccadilly Circus, they worked outwards until they reached Angel to the north, Lambeth Bridge to the south, Shoreditch to the east and Hyde Park to the west.

"Both SCEE and SCEA really liked the idea and vision of The Getaway," recalls McNamara. "Even from the very beginning, with the first screenshots of Piccadilly Circus that we released, people really bought into the idea of constructing a large portion of London for a videogame." Ah yes.

Those screenshots. The ones that looked, shall we say, too real: a shiny silver car driving past Starbucks and Pret-A-Manger. The famous neon advertising boards that adorn Piccadilly Circus, the Burger King and Dunkin' Donuts signs beneath. The games industry was agasp – could these people really make a game that played as good as those screenshots looked? And were they screenshots or mock-ups?

That was over two years ago. Since then, PlayStation 2 has seen the graphical finesse of Gran Turismo 3: A-spec, Metal Gear Solid 2 and, more importantly, crime-based adventure Grand Theft Auto III. Games that had promised so much but, crucially, delivered so much more. The PS2 was now officially hot. Developers were walking it like they talked it and the stage was finally built for a great game that combined the realism of Gran Turismo 3 and the gameplay of GTAIII. Unfortunately, instead of doing just that, The Getaway suddenly made a swift handbrake turn and

went into hiding. Not to a grimy caravan on an allotment in Essex, but to the fourth floor of SCEE's development studio complex in the heart of SoHo. With a lack of development updates, the rumours soon started. The Getaway was cancelled. Those screenshots had been pre-rendered. Sony had pumped millions into a lost cause. So had The Getaway really gone AWOL? What happened to it? Well, quite a lot actually.

TIME FOR A REVAMP

Creating a game as vast as this needed time. Much more time. More than McNamara and his team had ever envisaged. Originally The Getaway had



THE GETAWAY: A TIMELINE

The Getaway will finally fit the shelves this winter. But why's it taken so long?



Early PSone titles, Porsche Challenge and Rapid Racer are developed and released by SCEE. The internal development team behind these games will go on to become Studio London – recently renamed Team SoHo.



Work begins on a Driven-inspired PSone version of The Getaway with a team of just nine people.

The decision is made to move The Getaway from PSone to PlayStation 2. The development starts from scratch.



The then-Studio London make the decision to set the game in photo-realistic streets and buildings, while research and development begins into the facial animation technology that will be known as Talking Heads.



Anna Edwards (Pamini) and Don Kenbury (Mark Hammond) are cast as voice actors.



The first screenshots of the game are released, showing a photo-realistic car driving around an accurately realised London street. Jaws drop. Cynicism begins.

Main story undergoes a rewrite and level-development takes place.

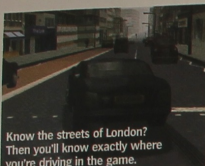


A 70-page screenplay is penned by Brendan McNamara and Katie Elwood. More characters are cast.

A new motion-capture experiment puts multiple actors in any one scene. The system uses magnetic fields, rather than the more traditional light sensors, to make the process more flexible.



In on-foot sections Mark can now take people hostage.



Know the streets of London? Then you'll know exactly where you're driving in the game.



As in GTAIII, if you start on the cops you're a marked man.



Piccadilly Circus - one of the first areas Team SoHo mapped for The Getaway.

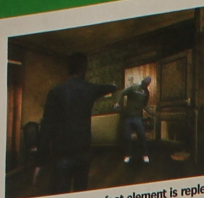
been planned as a mission-based racer for the PSone, partly inspired by Reflections' Driver. Its focus was on driving with no on-foot element. At this time, the London level covered only 15 percent of the area now rendered in the PS2 version. When Driver 2 came out in 2000 with the added option of walking, the team decided to shift to a more powerful platform. As a result, The Getaway was rebuilt from scratch for PS2. It didn't use an existing game engine, it wasn't a port and all the technology used was specially developed by the coders.

"When we got hold of the PS2, we wanted to create some really extensive environments," explains McNamara. "It's difficult to do that with only 4Mb of Video RAM, which meant we had to find a way of streaming all those millions of textures in order to create realistic environments." Once this had been achieved, it became clear that with such an impressive game world, everything that inhabited it had to be equally realistic. After all, creating your

//To achieve the right level of personality and atmosphere in the game, we involved people from the film and TV industry//

keen to point out that they always wanted to create a 'serious' game, as opposed to the comic stylings of Lock, Stock And Two Smoking Barrels. "The Getaway has been deliberately designed as an 18-certificate game," states McNamara. "Not just so we could be gratuitous, but because it meant we could tackle issues usually only reserved for films." The game is graphically violent, and, to paraphrase Simon Bates, "contains sexual swear words." Yes, those swear words. "We've tried to appeal to an older audience. Not just over-18s, but those outside the normal type of gamers. We'll be showing trailers at cinemas and I'm hoping people will say, 'Wow, I'm going to buy that.'"

"But how does it feel to play? you ask. Does it matter that the game is advertised



The third-person on-foot element is replete with ducks, dodges and sneaks.

location is only the first stage.

"When we put our characters into the game they looked lifeless," remembers McNamara. "Then we made the decision to scan real people's faces, bodies, expressions and movements in. They looked brilliant and movements in. They looked brilliant then, but still lacked life and personality." Something more was required.

It was at this stage that The Getaway took a new direction. One that added the extra 12 months of development time. "To achieve the right level of personality and atmosphere, we involved people from the film and TV industry," says McNamara. Production Designer Simon Wood scouted for interior locations, while Script Writer Katie Ellwood assisted McNamara in developing a 70-page script. A cast of actors was also recruited to play characters in the game, a move that provided film production values. "A lot of people in the team have film sensibility and film aspirations, but they still love videogames," McNamara explains. "We asked the question, 'Can something be more than a movie and more than a videogame - I don't know what you'd call that, but that's what we were trying to do.'"

It's well-documented that Team SoHo looked to such films as The Long Good Friday for inspiration. However, McNamara is

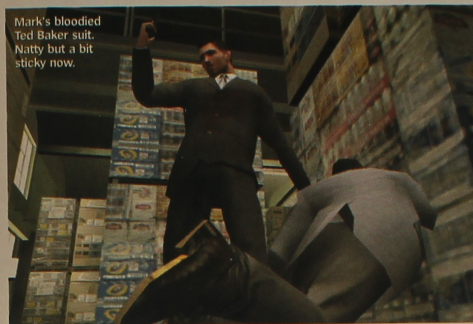
CRUISING THE CITY STREETS

Happily, we can confirm that those images are the real deal. Sitting with Lead Designer Chun Wah Kong, we watch as he loads up the game. The opening cut-scene begins. Two gangsters sit in a car, bantering about their latest assignment. The pair's job is to kidnap the child of Mark Hammond, an ex-gangster. The action then cuts to Mark's wife Susie Hammond and their son as the two gangsters accost them, claiming to be detectives. Realising their scam, Susie tries to grab her son and a shot rings out. Susie is wounded and the gangsters flee with the boy. Mark appears on the scene in time to witness his son being driven off.

From here, the player is instantly thrown into a cross-London chase to the gangsters' warehouse hideout south of the river. Following a direction cursor, we make our way across Waterloo Bridge and take a hard left along the south bank of the Thames. Wah Kong asks how we're finding the handling. "A bit sensitive," is the answer, as we bounce off walls, lampposts and traffic.

For gamers used to the more forgiving driving experience of GTAIII, The Getaway does take getting used to. At one point, the car flips over after a nasty collision. "That's it," says Wah Kong, "you'll have to start again." In this game, you don't get a second chance. As we master the controls, other subtleties outside the car pull you into the gameworld. Pedestrians are localised, for example. Drive through Chinatown and most people sport Oriental features, for instance. Even the type of vehicles reflect your current position. Cruise through Mayfair and you'll pass Bentleys and Mercs; drive through East London and Capris and Cortinas are the order of the day. In total, 65 licensed vehicles feature, among them a double-decker bus and a forklift truck.

On reaching the warehouse, Mark leaves the car. We take control of him in third-person view and enter the building. Going through the door cues no loading screen -



Mark's bloodied Ted Baker suit. Nitty but a bit sticky now.

//Cruise through Mayfair and you'll pass Bentleys and Mercs; drive through East London and Capris and Cortinas are the order of the day//

we just walk straight in... and promptly get shot. "Gamers will have to think about this game differently to what they're used to," laughs Wah Kong. "You can't just walk in, guns blazing. You need to think how you'd do it for real." Trying again, we use a combination of controls to tentatively check round the corner, before jumping out and blowing away the first of the gangsters. It soon becomes apparent such stealthier tactics are essential to staying alive.

We take another hit and Mark begins to stagger, blood oozing from a wound. Aiming now gets tougher as the injury saps Mark's strength. "We don't use health bars," says Wah Kong. "It helps people forget they're in a game." The interior of the warehouse looks authentic, with 'real' products stacked on pallets. Famous beer labels nestle alongside well-known cigarette logos. Incredibly, Wah Kong hopes to make this background furniture destructible.

After wasting the goons, you reach the office of gang boss Charlie Jolson. A cut-scene tells us that Jolson is using Mark's son as a hostage in order to blackmail him into doing a series of jobs. In the finished game, these will total 12 missions. A further 12 will follow, playing from the perspective of policeman Frank Carter. The first of these is a potentially suicidal hit against some of Mark's former gang members in a Chinatown restaurant. For once, cut-scenes are well-scripted, and never sound forced. The facial expressions add to the effect, as does the tight lip-synching, courtesy of the Talking Heads technology designed by the games Lead Animator, Gavin Moore.

Starting the game's first mission, and

now a little more au fait with the controls, we do some sightseeing - driving up Regent Street and donutting into Oxford Street, before taking the pavement route into the heart of Soho. "We're including a Tourist mode," reveals Wah Kong. "You'll be able to take pictures of the landmarks." The team has also added a special Taxi Driver mode. Pick up tourists, and in an inspired twist, take the unknowing passengers on the longest route between two destinations.

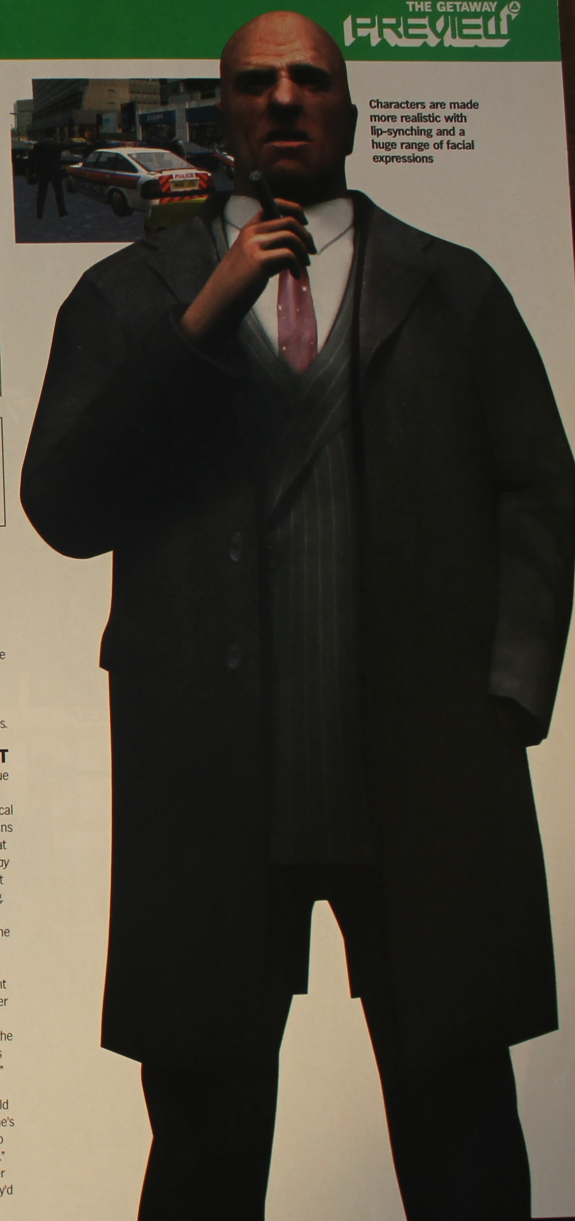
PASSION AND COMMITMENT

Three years in development, a year overdue and little information filtering out about progress, has left the gaming press sceptical about The Getaway. But McNamara remains positive. "There are no games on Xbox that look as good or feel as big as The Getaway on PS2. There aren't any other games that have a story that actually means anything. That's probably why the game's taken so long." And from a technical perspective, the opportunities for expanding The Getaway are numerous. "We have this huge digital asset," McNamara points out. "We've spent two years building technology and another year working on the gameplay," he says. "We're now making another game using the tools we developed The Getaway with. It's actually more of a prequel than a sequel."

McNamara's passion for the game is evident. "I'm proud of the team. They could have bottled it many times. Now the game's close to coming out and I think it lives up to about 80 percent of our original vision." He pauses. "I don't think anybody will ever produce a game with a similar scale. They'd be stupid to attempt it anyway." ■



Characters are made more realistic with lip-synching and a huge range of facial expressions

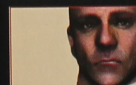


OPS2 reports for the first time on The Getaway. Javier Carrión, a Programmer on the game, is featured talking about the high level of detail being used for the cars and their physics. Again, our supplied screenshots look highly impressive. Again, are they real?



Sam Coates, Lead Artist, reveals the processes behind Team SoHo's diligent mapping of 20 square miles of central London in a presentation called 'London Wasn't Built In A Day. Content Acquisition For Levels In The Getaway.' Emphasis is now placed on the fact that 40 percent of the gameplay will take place out of the car. Coates notes that pressure is high for his team to create a 'flagship PS2 title.'

Brendan McNamara and his team are given a further year to complete The Getaway.



OPS2 covers on The Getaway - and those screenshots were real! We visit Team SoHo to see the game running. No out-of-control action yet but we watch a selection of vehicles career around a photo-realistic London.



President of SCE, Chris Deering, tells OPS2. The Getaway could have been on the market now, but so many ideas have come along that will make it even better. It'll definitely be out way before next year.



OPS2 visits the re-named Team SoHo and actually plays The Getaway. The public will get to play it this winter.



The engines roar, the tyres squeal and... and... they're off! Game on.



Touring Car racing is frantic and ultra-competitive. Everything that F1 isn't.

WHAT'S THE DAMAGE?

True to the TOCA series, *Race Driver* goes to extraordinary lengths to show damage. Fenders bend, lights and windows shatter, and whole sections of bodywork get distorted then fall off. Be warned: The more scrapes you get into, the worse your car handles.



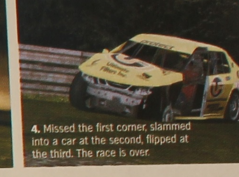
1. TOCA Rule One – learn the race tracks. Slam your motor into the barrier and this is the result.



2. A little first corner jostling, a nudge here, a bump there, but it's damage the pit crew can fix.



3. TOCA's handling can be feisty and unforgiving at first. Races are won by slaying on the track. Okay?



4. Missed the first corner, slammed into a car at the second, flipped at the third. The race is over.

TEXT: PAUL FITZPATRICK

TOCA RACE DRIVER

The car's the star, right? Not here. *TOCA Race Driver* is a much more human experience...

- Publisher: Codemasters
- Developer: Codemasters
- Players: 1-4
- Release: September

How can Codemasters improve on a series that was near unbeatable from the get go? Well, to paraphrase budget crooner Max Bygraves, they 'wanna tell you a story'. That's right, *TOCA* has been jangling the nerves of race fans since 1997, so now Codemasters wants your heart involved, too. And it's aiming to do it in a blockbuster-style narrative that will shift emphasis from the cars to their drivers. Sitting comfortably? Then we'll begin. (The following is greatly enhanced by reading in a gruff, movie trailer voice).

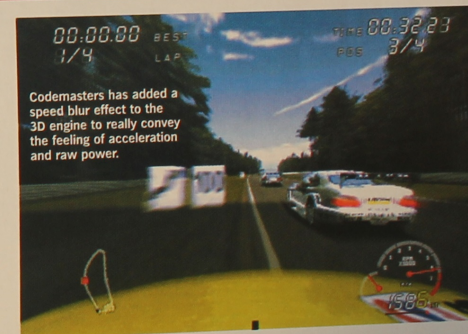
Ryan McKane is a Touring Car test driver and younger brother to Daddy's favourite son and superstar TOCA driver, Donnie. Caught between his father's name

(Dad's a veteran race driver himself) and Donnie's success, Ryan is going nowhere fast. But when Kyle dies in a spectacular crash, Ryan's grief turns to naked ambition. He's going to be the best damn TOCA driver in the world and make his daddy proud!

The narrative seems cheesy but the theory is sound. With judicious use of brief cut-scenes and a well designed, context-based front end (see On The Menu!) the developer aims to put emotive flesh on the bones of the game. Nobody, with the possible exception of Michael Knight, can say they've ever been dissed by a car. But put an arch rival at the wheel of said car and put it in front of you with one lap of Holland's Zandvoort track remaining before the chequered flag, and it's a different kettle of bolts entirely.

DRIVING AMBITIONS

To this end, the traditionally abstract menu screens have been given the heave-ho in favour of locations in the professional life of your in-game persona, Ryan McKane. The



Codemasters has added a speed blur effect to the 3D engine to really convey the feeling of acceleration and raw power.

main menu is Ryan's office, complete with interactive PC (for email race offers/Career mode), filing cabinet (Options), Wall Chart (info on rivals worldwide) and a door leading to the relaxation room. In there you'll find Multiplayer, Time Trial, and Free Ride modes, and so it continues. If this sounds at all reminiscent of the method that EA LA employed to heap instant atmosphere onto

the *Medal Of Honor* games' front ends, you'd be right. Indeed, Codemasters' Studio Head, Gavin Raeburn has cited the WWII games' ability to conjure an involving ambience as an unusual source of inspiration for *Race Driver*'s narrative.

The contextualisation of the menus seems to work just as well here. As for the cut-scene-assisted narrative? ➔

Unfortunately, the Career mode was not implemented in the version we played, so how effective the FMVs are in practice is yet to be seen. One thing is certain, by motion-capturing entire scenes together – as opposed to motion-capturing individuals, making a composite scene after the event and then dubbing in dialogue – the end result will be as naturalistic as current technology can afford.

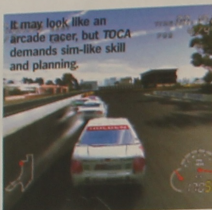
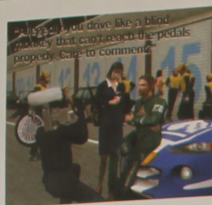
But enough of narrative, context and

//Nobody, except perhaps Michael Knight, can say they've ever been dissed by a car//

method. What is this? A racing game or a Merchant Ivory film? Impatient race fans can relax (Merchant Ivory fans, you're in the wrong mag). It's a relief to be able to say that an unfortunate baby/bath water scenario has been avoided and TOCA Race Driver is very much its parents' child.

Each of the game's 38 international tracks has been lovingly recreated from official – and therefore expensive – to obtain – statistics. Likewise, each of the 40-plus unlockable cars from the Rover MG ZS to the Dukes Of Hazard's pride and joy (the gorgeously throaty '69 Dodge Charger), has been created with utmost realism. That includes recording the cars' engine sounds at source, naturally. It wouldn't be TOCA without realistic damage and Race Driver is not set to disappoint. The game borrows a system used in official crash tests called FEM (or Finite Element Modelling) to recreate automotive bruising and chafing with incredible detail. And since each race can have up to 13 challengers cutting you up at every turn, the chances are you'll get to see just how good it is many, many times. Windows shatter, bumpers get ripped off, body panels dent and shred. It's very impressive. Equally impressive is the way damage has a direct and proportional effect on your car's performance. Still, with a bit of luck you'll have caused a pile-up big enough to ensure that you won't be the only one driving around in what looks like a knackered clown's car.

Cars and tracks become available as you make your largely non-linear way through the Career mode's 13 championships. These are a mixture of officially licensed events like the British and



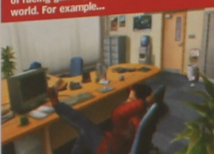
German Touring Car Championships and composite, fictitious tournaments that pick and choose from the world's most challenging circuits. All in the name of racing pleasure.

CAN YOU HANDLE IT?

With no option to provide difficulty settings, Race Driver is, like its predecessors, firmly parked in the sim camp. Learning the handling characteristics of your car and knowing every turn of each track before you challenge new opponents is essential if you're going to come out on top. And although successful powersliding is a feature of the game, it's a hard-won joy rather than a lazily done deal. In short, ploughing gung-ho into races will have you limping out of sand traps with missing (car) body parts again and again. Here, there's no substitute for genuine skill, something that you can nurture happily, chasing your previous lap's ghost car around the tracks in the

ON THE MENU

It's all about atmosphere. Instead of the customary, abstract menus that grace the majority of racing games, TOCA Race Driver lets you move between locations in hero Ryan McKane's world. For example...



1. Driver HQ
This is where you mastermind your ascent through the Touring Car championships. See the guy reclining in the chair? That's you.



2. Free Race Area
A place to chill, but also where you sort out multiplayer races, time trials and who knows, maybe hook yourself up with a can of pop.



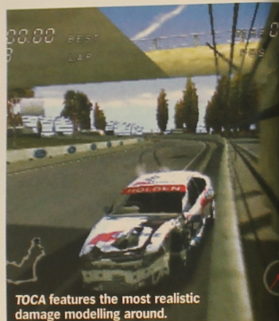
3. The Key Cupboard
Here's where you choose your ride for the race ahead. Move between key rings and they'll swing to and fro. It's a small touch but a pleasing one all the same.

4. The Garage
You've chosen your car and here it is. While you take a seat, the tech bods start getting it prepped to race. Head to the clipboard and you can alter all sorts of components.

Time Trial mode. Or, failing that practice against up to three other players in the Multiplayer mode, with the added thrill of potential humiliation to spur you on.

Then there's race preparation. Should you want to tweak your chosen car's performance, you won't be disappointed. Aside from the cosmetic concerns of the car's livery, you can make changes to gears, downforce, suspension, anti-roll, tyres and brake bias. And when you're done, you can take your mechanically engineered monster out for a pre-race test drive.

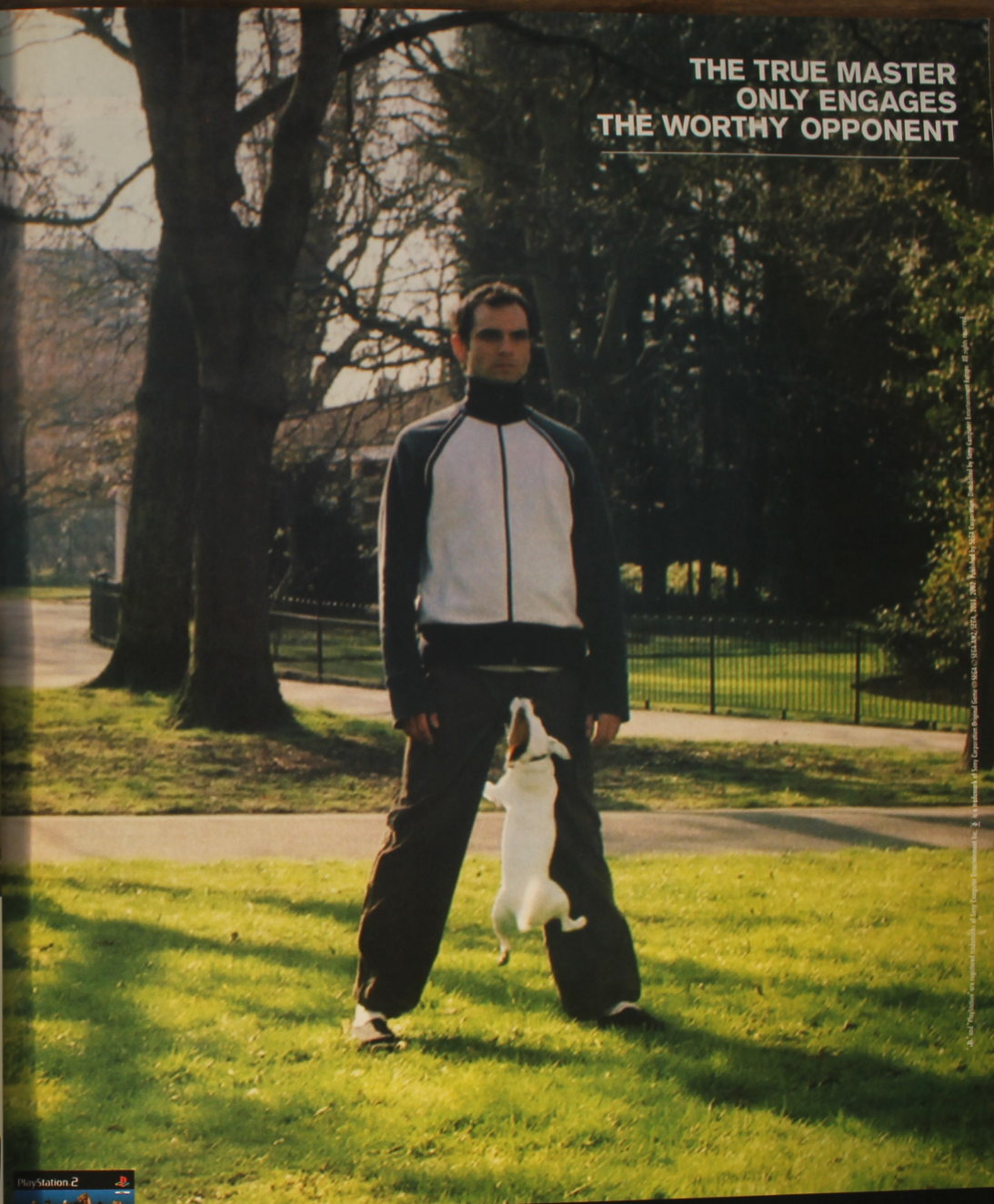
As the game nears completion, the core racing is there and it's satisfyingly challenging and edgy. If the story element does its job and gives TOCA a human face, then petrolheads are in for a unique treat. It's a cliffhanger worthy of Hollywood. ■



TOCA features the most realistic damage modelling around.



THE TRUE MASTER ONLY ENGAGES THE WORTHY OPPONENT



The one true-to-life martial arts fighting game.



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PlayStation 2
THE THIRD PLACE

Get the lowdown on all the other cracking racing games zooming to PS2 in the remainder of 2002 and early 2003.

RELEASE ROUND-UP



F355 Challenge

• Publisher: **SCEE** • Developer: **Sega/AM2** • Release Date: **September**
Designed by Yu Suzuki, the game genius behind Out Run and Hang-On, F355 is a startlingly in-depth simulation based around the classic Ferrari model. Updated for PS2 from the original Dreamcast release, this is the definition of the term 'hardcore'. Not one for the amateur driver...



MX Superfly

• Publisher: **THQ** • Developer: **Pacific Coast Power & Light**
• Release Date: **August**
The follow up to motocross racer MX 2002 has seemingly lost its Ricky Carmichael cover star but makes up for it by adding more modes, tricks, 15 new tracks and the exclusive rights to feature the Annual AMA Amateur National MX Championships at Loretta Lynn's Ranch. Expect to see Tony Hawk's-style mini games and Freestyle Track editor in there too.



Gumball 3000

• Publisher: **SCI** • Developer: **Climax**
• Release Date: **September**
This real-life Cannonball Run is a 3000 mile checkpoint road race across hazardous and hostile terrain, made famous by its roster of rich participants. The PS2 version invites you to take any route you can, break speed limits and evade roadblocks on a quest to become the Gumball 3000 champion. Should be great fun.

Need For Speed: Hot Pursuit 2

• Publisher: **EA** • Developer: **EA** • Release Date: **September**
Competing directly with Burnout 2 in terms of balls-out speed kicks and police chase thrills, this veteran series has plenty of tricks up its exhaust pipe. Among them are twenty desirable licensed cars, shortcut-filled open environments, plus hazards like helicopter back up and tyre-bursting Stingers. You probably already feel the need...



Riding Spirits

• Publisher: **Bantl Entertainment**
• Developer: **Spike**
• Release Date: **November**
Tagged 'Gran Turismo with bikes', this sim takes all the elements of Polyphony's series and applies them to two wheels. Solid graphics, varied race tracks and a familiar career mode combine with fully licensed bikes and suitably unforgiving handling.



Total Immersion Racing

• Publisher: **Empire** • Developer: **Razorworks** • Release Date: **November**
THR hopes to bring a higher level of personality and intelligence to the GT racing genre. The featured drivers have their own driving styles - they'll also bear grudges should you get on the wrong side of them in a race. 18 licensed GT cars and a range of real circuits completes the package.

Shox

• Publisher: **EA Sports** • Developer: **EA** • Release Date: **October**
EA applies the BIG brand to rallying and looks set to deliver a Sega Rally-style larger than life version of the sport. The twist is, in order to attain new vehicles you must earn spending money by entering one-on-one competitions against AI drivers. We suspect Colin McRae doesn't do this.



Burnout 2: Point Of Impact

• Publisher: **Acclaim** • Developer: **Criterion Studios**
• Release Date: **November**
The second instalment of Criterion's excellent high-octane arcade racer promises brand new tracks, 14 new cars and impressive weather effects that have an adverse effect on driving. Levels include a sun soaked, Out Run-inspired beach town, a snow flecked mountain dash and a rainy night time circuit set round a busy international airport. As with the original, the emphasis is firmly on speed, instant thrills and of course blood-curdlingly spectacular crashes. Hugely promising.



GTA: Vice City

• Publisher: **Rockstar**
• Developer: **Rockstar North**
• Release Date: **November**
The bad boy of driving action games is set to return in November, this time burning up the streets of Vice City - or in other words Miami. Few gameplay specifics have been revealed but we anticipate new characters, new vehicles (helicopters, motorbikes and speedboats), improved visuals and more than a liberal dose of Eighties culture. So that's Giorgio Moroder and Jan Hammer on the stereo and pastel coloured Espadrilles on your feet. Cool.



Rally Fusion: The Race Of Champions

• Publisher: **Activision**
• Developer: **Climax Brighton**
• Release Date: **November**
Based on the real annual event in which the best drivers from all disciplines race against each other on a figure of eight circuit. Expect cool cars and scenery.

Micro Machines

• Publisher: **Infogrames**
• Developer: **Sheffield House**
• Release Date: **November**
Everyone's favourite toy racer returns with next-gen graphics, more detailed cars and new levels set in a spaceship, a barnyard, a crime stage (featuring a seedy drug den) and a jungle. And yes, the hilarious hammer power-up is still in there. Size isn't everything.



World Rally Championship 02

• Publisher: **SCEE**
• Developer: **Evolution Studios**
• Release Date: **December**
Evolution's rally sim is back and set to make the original look like a mere shakedown to the main event. WRC produced courses stretching as far as the eye could see, and the sequel is expected to increase this impressive vista by 200%. As well as all the latest WRC cars and drivers, Evolution has added trackside features like streams, fords and lakes, plus country specific landmarks. The team is also seeking to accommodate newcomers by giving each skill level its own handling model and a tutorial option to help coach less proficient drivers.



Wreckless: The Yakuza Missions

• Publisher: **Activision**
• Developer: **Stealth Studios**
• Release Date: **December**
First released on Microsoft's Xbox to great reviews, Wreckless is set in Hong Kong and puts players in the position of either a high-level government agent or a member of an elite police task force. Either way, this mission-based driving action title has you using one of 25 vehicles (police cars, trucks, sports cars, etc) across 20 missions attempting to take down the down the Yakuza. Driver style vehicle damage is the order of the day, with wine-inducing crash dynamics proving a highlight.



Smash Cars

• Publisher: **Metro 3D**
• Developer: **Creat Studios**
• Release Date: **TBC 2003**
Acclaim's RC franchise has so far failed to replicate the real thrills of remote control car racing, but perhaps Smash Cars will have more luck. You burn round the many interactive levels, avoiding people, animals, cars and any other real-world obstacles. It'll boast accurate RC physics, loads of power-ups and a shortcut or two. Micro Machines meets Gran Turismo? Stranger things have happened...



Indy Car Racing

• Publisher: **Codemasters**
• Developer: **Brain In A Jar**
• Release Date: **TBC 2003**
The first PS2 title based around the famous Indy Race League and its most well-known event, the Indianapolis 500. As you'd expect, the official license guarantees the rights to feature accurately modelled tracks, real teams, cars and drivers.



Lamborghini

• Publisher: **Rage**
• Developer: **Rage Warrington**
• Release Date: **TBC 2003**
PS2 owners will be given the chance to drive the favourite sports car of the rich and unsuccessful in Rage's forthcoming Lamborghini. Models included for racing and collecting include the first Lamborghini production car, the 350 GT, the Miura (as seen in the opening sequence of the Italian job movie) and the iconic classic Countach. Mmm, sexy.



The realistic racers that mix pre-race tuning and tweaking with advanced handling physics. This ain't no place for learner drivers...

P 34 GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC

The third title in the ultimate driving series offers more depth and longevity than a Tolstoy novel.

P 37 GRAN TURISMO CONCEPT

Cool GT add-on with the fast and the curious from last year's Tokyo and this year's Geneva motor shows.

P 40 LE MANS 24 HOURS

Engaging and exciting replication of the famous all-day driving fest. Go on, try the real-time 24 hour model!

P 41 FORMULA 1 2001

SCEE's long-running F1 series proves its mettle again...

P 42 F1 2002

... But EA's flash newcomer is closing in behind.

P 43 F1 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON

Decidedly average early PS2 Formula One title.

P 43 F1 RACING CHAMPIONSHIP

As above, but slightly worse!



PS2 PlayStation 2 SPECIAL EDITION: RACING GAMES

//GT3 is a hardcore game and its GT mode is so hardcore it makes the Wu-Tang Clan look like S Club//



The lighting effects are gorgeous. Just look at that sky, man!



Sliding through corners on the rally tracks sends up sandstorms that could bury Egypt.



The stunning forest section of Trial Mountain. Lush.

GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC

The engine roars, the tyres squeal and the world's greatest driving series accelerates onto PS2. Oh yes, the daddy is here..

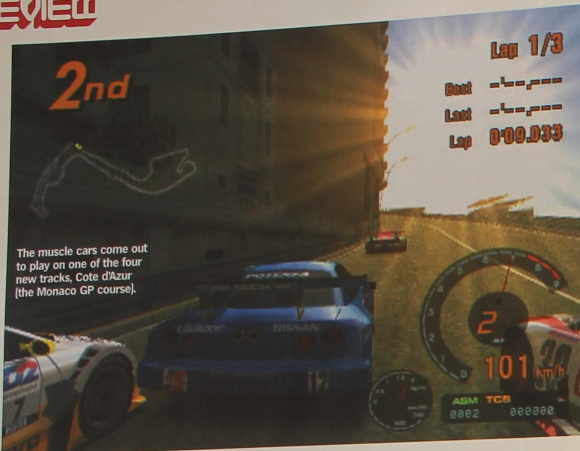
Publisher: SCEE Developer: Polyphony Digital
Price: £19.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

From the ground-breaking original to the even better sequel, Gran Turismo has become a genre defining series, with every racing game in its mighty wake pining in comparison. Now updated for PS2, the expectations were sky high for a game that would combine the glorious visuals the console is capable of with the deep gameplay and fantastic handling of the originals. It doesn't disappoint.

In a perfect marriage, the best driving series ever and the world's best console have got it together and the result is predictably superb. Load it up, watch the flashy intro and breathe a sigh of relief as a familiar menu screen appears with all the modes and options we know and love present and correct. Pick a sexy motor (the Skyline GT-R will do nicely), select a favourite track and prepare to breathe your second sigh of relief. The handling is spot on. But that isn't

what you'll notice first. While we certainly aren't a bunch of graphics tarts, you'd have to be blind or insistent not to be blown away by the menagerie of lighting, scenery and reflections streaming towards your softly weeping eyes. Considering it's still relatively early in the console's life, the visual flair achieved in GT3 is nothing short of spectacular.

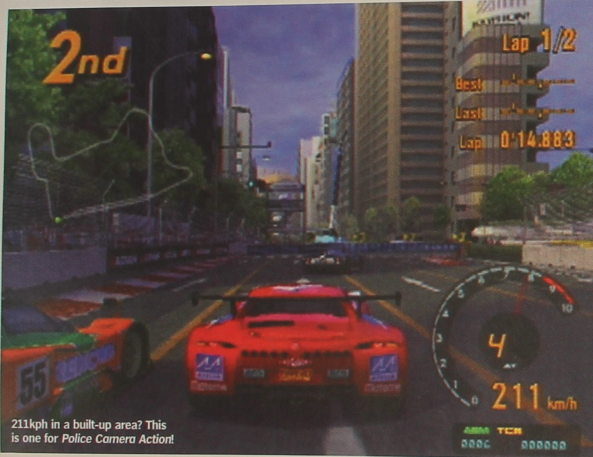
Once you've gotten over the staggering visuals you'll find a lovingly created racing extravaganza. For veterans of the series, taking your car for a spin will be pleasantly familiar - retaining the excellent handling of the original, improving it with tweaked physics and infusing it with more speed than a party at Eton. As before, the cars are categorised according to power, beginning with the puny B class and culminating with Special class. There are huge distinctions between the licenses, especially with the Rally class which provides a refreshing change from the cautious driving required for road racing - allowing you to ignore the brake while skidding through corners at top speed. Like nearly everything in the game, it just feels right.



The muscle cars come out to play on one of the four new tracks, Cote d'Azur (the Monaco GP course).



The turbo-charged super car Toyota Castrol Tom's Supra in action. It's one of the very best vehicles in the game.



211kph in a built-up area? This is one for Police Camera Action!

As ever, the racing action can be divided into two sections: Arcade and GT mode. Arcade contains Time Attack, Single Race and Free Run, all of which are useful for honing your skills, as well as providing a quick burst of excitement without the hassle of customisation and earning money. And one of the great pleasures of all racing games, two-player head-to-head, can also be found here.

But despite the numerous and undoubted charms of Arcade, every Gran Turismo fan knows where it's really at. GT3 is a hardcore game for hardcore racers and its all-encompassing GT mode is so hardcore it makes the Wu-Tang Clan look like S Club.

Wisely retaining the peerless licensing system, the game demands that you own the correct papers to enter the corresponding tournaments. Winning the licenses is almost a game in itself and those with enough patience and driving skills to achieve an all-gold rating are rightly rewarded with a prize car. On the subject of cars, there are considerably less of them than GT2 offered. But then, a tally of 150 beautiful autos is certainly not to be sniffed at and with seriously desirable performance cars like the Aston Martin Vantage and the Lister Storm V12 available, the compulsion to keep racing and keep adding more cash to the coffers until you can afford them is as strong as ever.



MULTIPLAYER MOTORING

Link up with a pal (or six) for maximum racing fun.

Besides the traditional magic of Arcade's two-player races, Gran Turismo 3 also introduces the genius that is LINK, bringing a TV, a PS2, a link cable, and a copy of the game to the party – and with a sextet of speed freaks all set up in the same room and racing hell for leather. It's one of the greatest and most exciting multiplayer experiences in gaming history. There's absolutely no slowdown and because you're playing against evil human opponents rather than computer AI, the racing is beautifully unpredictable. It's like playing GT3 in the arcades – except the arcade is in your own home.

We haven't had this much fun since six-player Daytona USA and four-player Gauntlet back in the coin-op days of yore. The tragedy is that, as with other link-up games such as F355 Challenge on DC and WipeOut on PSone, only a few people will ever get to try it out. But even if you can only gather two loads of kit together it's more than worth the hassle, as this really is state-of-the-art and the pinnacle of home multiplayer racing.



The Swiss Alps. Offers more dirt than an inner city newsagent.

If you're looking for flaws then the continued lack of vehicle damage is a shame – now that the series has reached new levels of visual authenticity, slamming your car into a barrier at 200mph without so much as a scratch not only looks daft, but goes against the whole 'realistic' essence of the series. Also, the AI of the CPU cars still follows a pre-set routine – one shoots to the front, another hangs around on your tail and the remaining three drive together as a pack. And while this makes for close, competitive racing, it is somewhat predictable.

However, these problems can't disguise the fact that Gran Turismo 3 is the best driving simulation ever made and the killer app we all anticipated it would be. Although its realism may be a big selling point, GT3 quite rightly favours fun over simulation and this is ultimately why it's such a joy to play. If you have even the slightest interest in racing games you need to own this beauty. **Lee Hart**

GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC

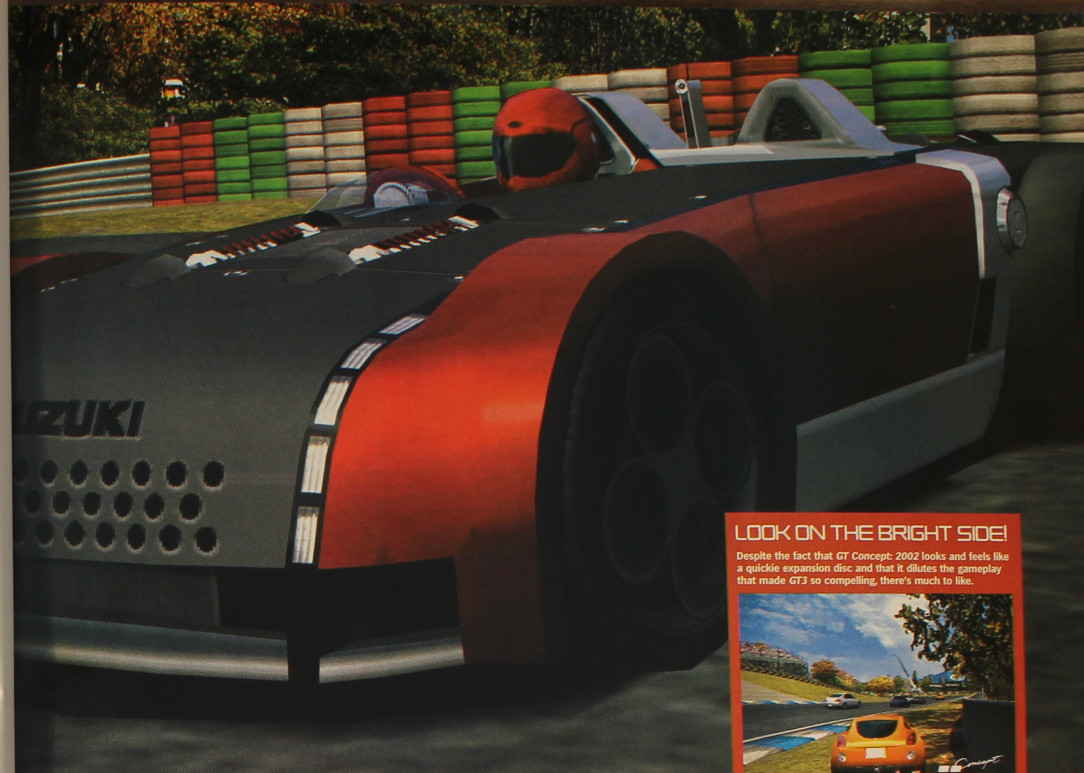
Why we'd buy it:
- Erm, it's the best driving game on PS2
- That pretty much covers it

Why we'd leave it:
- Tough to master
- Mediocre AI
- Still no vehicle damage

09

PlayStation 2

NERDICT

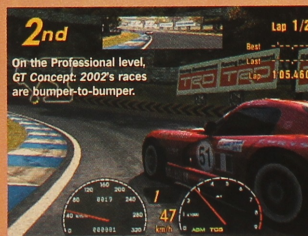


GT CONCEPT: 2002 TOKYO-GENEVA

You've driven GT3: A-Spec, now Polyphony invites you to take the limited edition model for a spin.

Publisher: SCEE Developer: Polyphony Digital
Price: £29.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

If Gran Turismo 3: A-Spec is the King of PS2 driving games, then GT Concept: 2002 Tokyo-Geneva is a flashy but minor Duke from somewhere like Norfolk. Both games have the same Polyphony Digital bloodline. But rather than a true



On the Professional level, GT Concept: 2002's races are bumper-to-bumper.

sequel to GT3 or an expansion disc, this slick and compact racer is a Gran Turismo spin-off. To put things in perspective, GT Concept: 2002 Tokyo-Geneva is an enhanced version of Polyphony's GT Concept: Tokyo 2001 in Japan. So not only does this new game simulate some of the production and concept cars that appeared at the 2001 Tokyo Motor Show, it also models those from the 2001 Geneva event.

So where GT3 offered you the chance to drive cars you could never afford, GT Concept: 2002 tempts you with cars that manufacturers will probably never make. However, not all of the extravagantly sculpted sports cars and pod-style people movers displayed at the two shows have been included. There's no room for the bizarre Honda Unibox or the eye-catching Mercedes-Benz F400 'Carving' which turned heads in Tokyo. Nor is there room for Ford's Street Ka and the single-seat Rinspeed R One which caused excited chatter in Geneva. But of the 95 driveable motors in GT Concept: 2002 25 are the wild dreams of car designers. Some prototypes, like Ford's GT40, you'll recognise from GT3. Others, like the sleek Chrysler Crossfire, the Hyundai Clix and the next-gen Honda DualNote (which has both electric and combustion engines) you won't.

LOOK ON THE BRIGHT SIDE!

Despite the fact that GT Concept: 2002 looks and feels like a quickie expansion disc, and that it dilutes the gameplay that made GT3 so compelling, there's much to like.



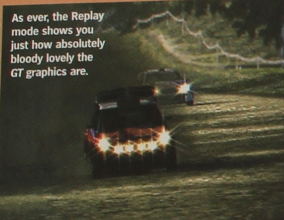
GT Concept: 2002 has a beautifully updated version of GT2's Autumn Ring circuit – kick up fallen leaves as you negotiate the tight corners, dare to keep the accelerator floored around those deceptively quick bends. Why isn't there more of it?



Like GT3, GT Concept: 2002 only features two race views – in-car and an external view. The Replay mode, however, features extra angles, allowing you to view your best (and worst) GT moments in the usual jaw-dropping TV broadcast style.



The 2P Battle is exactly that: a match-up between two players. Not you, a friend and four AI-driven rivals. Just the two of you. Surely the next game Internet options added will be able to give us a multiplayer mode that has a little more spice?



That leaves 70 non-concept production, rally and racing cars to play with. There are 21 cars from a range of American, Japanese and Korean manufacturers, including the Mazda 6, the smart Chevrolet Corvette Z06 and the Lexus IS300. The UK and European companies provide a further 17 production models, the Mini Cooper S, Type 72 Lotus Elise and the Tuscan Speed 6 among them. The remaining 32 cars are spread between two more car categories. Eleven 'Dream' cars represent the best that the Gran Turismo series has to offer, such as the Toyota RSC rally car, the Honda NSX-R and the Nissan GT-R Concept. The remaining 21 'Racing' cars offer souped-up, sponsor-splashed, spoiler-enhanced versions of old GT favourites – Mitsubishi's Lancer Evolution VII, Audi's TT and Toyota's Super Supra, for example.

SMALLER, POORER, LESSER?

But GT Concept 2002 isn't a case of new cars, old game. In fact, it's almost a case of new cars, no game. Considering the daunting depth of GT3, GT Concept 2002 presents you with disappointingly few options. There are no cups, leagues or championships to take part in, nor any class (4WD, FF, FR, MR) competitions, international challenges or patience-sapping endurance sessions. And because there's no core Gran Turismo mode, there's no money to earn, no extra parts for you to buy, no desperate need to customise your car to boost its acceleration or to improve the traction. Instead, GT Concept 2002 is simpler and shorter, offering quick-fix gaming rather than lengthy simulation. Advantage: It's easier for beginners to get to grips with. Disadvantage: GT veterans will finish it in a day-and-a-half. Probably less.

GT Concept 2002 (or should we call it GT 'Lite') has six main options: Course License, Single Race, 2P Battle,

//GT veterans will finish GT Concept: 2002 in a day-and-a-half. Probably less//

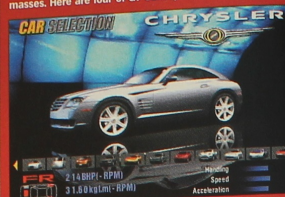
Free Run, Game Status and Link Battle. To unlock the tracks for the main single-player Racing mode, you first need to obtain a Course License for each one in a pre-selected test car. Veteran GT players will find the tracks all too familiar. There are three Tarmac courses: the Midfield Raceway and Tokyo R246 tracks from GT3 plus a revamped version of the Autumn Ring circuit from GT2. GT Concept 2002 also plunders GT3 for its two rally tracks: Swiss Alps and Tahiti Maze. Each course also comes with a reversed version, upping the track total to a rather unsatisfying ten.

With an optional Pace Car on hand to help you familiarise yourself with a track's bends and corners, each course has three Clear Times: Bronze, Silver and Gold. Hurtle round a circuit fast enough to win a Bronze trophy and you not only activate the track for the Single Race mode, but you unlock a new car. Win a Gold trophy and you



THE FUTURE OF THE CAR

Concept cars are more than just the wistful super-sketches of bored senior car designers. As technology testbeds they inspire innovations as visual inventions their outrageous curves will be softened to appeal to the masses. Here are four of GT Concept: 2002's finest:



Chrysler Crossfire
Debuted at the 2001 Detroit Motor Show, the Crossfire blends sleek European-style lines with the power and performance of a US sports coupe. Powered by a 2.7 litre, 275bhp V-6 engine, Chrysler's baby has an estimated top speed of 148mph and can hit 60mph in 5.8 seconds.



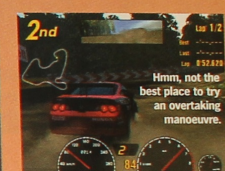
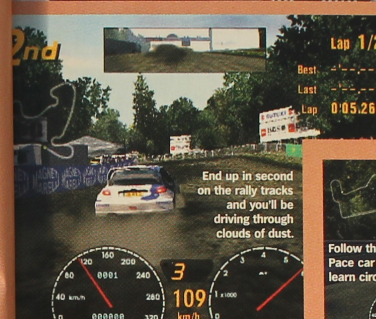
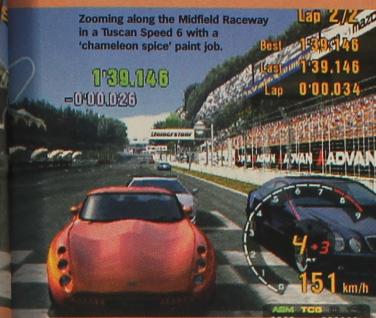
Honda DualNote
The wedge-shaped design and four-wheel drive aren't what make the DualNote stand out. It's what you can't see – a 3.5-litre V-6 engine with a gas-electric motor system. Honda calls it 'electric turbocharging', delivering 400bhp of efficient, eco-friendly performance.



Hyundai Clix
Like Toyota's stylish RSC, the 2-door Clix combines the aerodynamic lines of a sports car with the rugged versatility of an SUV. Hyundai has dubbed it an FAV (Fun Activity Vehicle), a practical four-wheel drive concept powered by a 2.2-litre engine capable of delivering 300bhp.

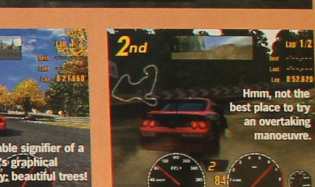


Suzuki GSX-R/4
Combining Suzuki's motorcycle and motorcar knowledge, the GSX-R/4 is every inch the sports car. Despite a small 1.3-litre engine, this lightweight concept can harness 172bhp and Suzuki estimate its top speed as 140mph. Distinctive race car design boosts the 'must-have' factor.



activate the track and two cars – one each for bettering the Bronze and Gold trophy times. With ten tracks to activate and two extra cars to win per track, there are 20 cars to unlock before you even turn your attention to the Single Race mode. Activate all ten tracks and you unlock a bonus 'Pod' race: a three-lap challenge contested by six symmetrically-designed Toyota/Sony concept cars.

Once a course has been unlocked, you can jump into the Single Race mode to compete on it. Each race can be contested on one of the two difficulty levels – Normal and Pro – and winning at each level unlocks a new car. Unlike GT3, where you were forced to customise your car by installing new components and reducing weight to boost performance, winning in GT Concept: 2002 is about picking the fastest car and driving a solid race. A Settings option allows you to tweak your car's ride height and spring rate, adjust its dampers, brake balance, downforce and gear ratio and change the tyres (soft, normal or hard). But, in truth, you don't need to fiddle. If the Aston Martin Vanquish isn't responsive enough, try the Viper GTSR Concept. If the Viper isn't fast enough try the Tuscan Speed 6 or a racing model – the Corvette C5R is a 620bhp monster; the Toyota RSC rally car is the fastest dirt-rider available.



//It's not an expansion disc – although you can win ten million credits to use as a GT3 save//

Each time you win a race or earn a bonus car you can check your progress on the Game Status screen. This shows all your unlocked cars and the percentage of the game you've completed. Beyond the repetitive Single Race competitions, the 2P and Link Battle modes provide the basic multiplayer support (although you still can't race CPU cars too) while the Free Run option is an extended practice session, complete with ghost cars and a performance analyser. Adjustable options let you change the number of laps you race, the available driving aids, and so on.

CONCEPT CARS, CONCEPT GAME

GT Concept: 2002 Tokyo-Geneva is not a GT3.5. Nor is it an expansion disc that adds new cars to the GT3 game – although you can win ten million credits that can be incorporated into a GT3 save. Ultimately, GT Concept 2002

is a stripped-down, GT3. Yes it boasts new cars, but these motor show one-offs must be balanced against what GT Concept 2002 lacks – multiple championship modes, the compelling GT option, new tracks and weather effects. Five seen-'em-before tracks (which you can only race during the day) seems stingy. And no, there aren't any hidden tracks or cars. Rent this game if you get the chance, but think twice before you buy. All you hardcore gamers will be disappointed by the poor fun-to-cost ratio.

For newcomers to Gran Turismo-ing, however, GT Concept 2002 provides a friendly introduction to the PS2's finest racer. This is 'baby' Turismo, its high-tech content counterbalanced by friendly options and gently challenging gameplay. But while it lacks the depth of GT3, it doesn't skimp on the detail. The 3D graphics are fantastic (reflective bodywork, track scene, heat haze, awesome lighting and shadowing effects) and the car models are just sublime. The handling is

perfect, the attention to detail is extraordinary and the soundtrack (13 songs from Ash, Daki Kashio and Feeder) is suitably stirring. Surprisingly priced at £29.99, GT Concept 2002 is £10 more expensive than the platinum version of the full and glorious GT3. Spending more money but getting less gameplay just doesn't seem right.

Dean Evans

GT CONCEPT: 2002 TOKYO-GENEVA

Why we'd buy it:
- Word and wonderful cars
- Gorgeous TV-style presentation

Why we'd leave it:
- Going back to GT3
- Too little for veterans
- GT3 is available for £20

06

PlayStation 2 NERDICT



Super-fast, super-slick arcade handling is the order of the day.

LE MANS 24 HOURS

The world's toughest race provides an endurance test of epic proportions. Are you man enough for 24 hour racing insanity?

Publisher: Infogrames Developer: Melbourne House
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Preparation is everything so construct your checklist wisely. Three tins of tomato soup (to be eaten cold); a packet of digestive biscuits; Paracetamol; five bottles of Lucozade; packets of cigarettes; a sleeping bag. Now lock yourself away. Focus. Prepare for endurance gaming at its most extreme. Prepare for *Le Mans 24 Hours*.

Your initial options include Quick Race, Championship, Le Mans 24 Hours and Time Trial. Quick Race lets you drive a mid-range car and proves diverting for a short time. The real motor sport aficionado, however, will soon crave the thrills of Championship mode where the game truly shines.

Offering eight distinct categories from Rookie GT through to Winter Endurance, the Championship mode is both satisfying and demanding. As you advance you earn points, new cars and longer, more challenging classes of race, namely the Prototype, Super Endurance and Winter Endurance. Those craving the full Le Mans experience can go straight into the 24 Hours option, choosing either full race or Petit Le Mans - as the name may suggest, a shorter version.

Thankfully, a quality game underpins this wealth of options. While handling is geared towards accessibility, various demands are placed on the player to retain realism. For example, once the



The rear view is an essential tool to scope your rivals.



shadows and jagged edges, the visuals truly shimmer when dusk falls and the stars begin to twinkle. Driving by Suzuka's famous Ferris Wheel,

illuminated against the night sky, is an experience to be savoured. The dynamic weather effects are equally well rendered adding oodles of atmosphere.

//Driving by Suzuka's Ferris Wheel illuminated against the night sky is an experience to be savoured//

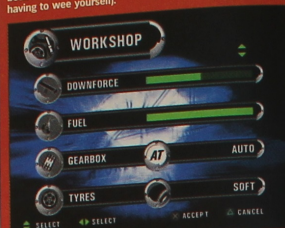
Endurance championship is unlocked (ten laps minimum) tyre wear becomes a major factor. Pit too late or select the incorrect tyres and you'll soon find yourself slipping around the track like an idiot.

The race experience is enhanced by the impressive draw distance and lighting effects. Ignoring some iffy

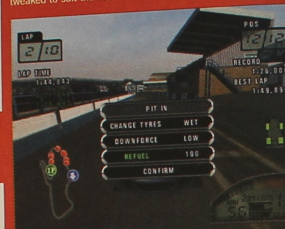
Ascending the Championship league tables proves deeply satisfying and the learning curve is well judged. Rivalries soon emerge and it's heartening to see that even AI drivers make unforced errors. On the down side, the Endurance mode is only challenging in terms of stamina and the overall arcade approach encourages cynical

THE PITS

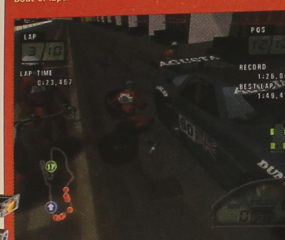
Taking pit stops at the right time can be the difference between winning and losing the race. (And, of course, having to wee yourself).



All vehicles can be customised to a limited degree in the workshop. Anything from downforce to gear ratios can be tweaked to suit the course and the player.



Enter the pit stop lane and a handy menu allows you to select the amount of fuel and tyre compounds needed for the next bout of laps.



Pit stops are vital in the endurance races. The animation is beautifully done and adds an air of authenticity missing from the Dreamcast version.

gamesmanship. Rival cars, for instance, provide handy barriers when cornering and the lack of damage means you never come off worse. It's also a pity - due to the usual licensing sensitivities - that cars do not suffer mechanical failure, the real source of Le Mans race drama.

Minor criticisms aside, Melbourne House has certainly delivered a thrilling, incredibly fast racer with enough depth and ambition to deserve a place in your racing game collection. Indeed, the gentle learning curve and instant accessibility may well offer an acceptable alternative to those who find the *Gran Turismo 3* handling model too exacting. **Mark Walbank**

LE MANS 24 HOURS

Why we'd buy it:
- A wealth of options
- Loads of unlockable stuff
- Instantly accessible

Why we'd leave it:
- A lot of raw in places
- No damage
- GT3 is superior

08

PlayStation 2 VERDICT



The draw distance is remarkable with the cars maintaining their detail right until they disappear over the horizon.

FORMULA ONE 2001

All the stats, all the drivers, all the circuits and all the options you'd expect from an officially licensed F1 thrill-fest.

Publisher: SCE Developer: Studio Liverpool
Price: £19.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Stadly, F1 is such a long-term discipline, it's incredibly difficult to translate into much of a gaming dynamic beyond the standard driving game. And since the actual driving bit is more of a marathon than a sprint, there has to be a strong emphasis on innovation to keep fair weather F1 fans hooked, punishing those corners lap after lap.

For *Formula One 2001* though, the angle is slickness and variety, with pretty much every aspect of the sport represented and the authenticity cranked up so high it would take the most churlish chassis-jockey to spot any lapses in translation. All of the professional drivers are 'officially' represented: from icy Mike Schumacher to steady Eddie Irvine and, of course, numerous Scandinavians with overbalanced consonant-vowel surname ratios.

The broad sweep of gameplay options offers multiple entry-points, based on developing skill and familiarity. Test Drive is the usual no-frills sampler, a low-stakes, one-off romp around any course, with any driver. Quick Race is the same, with added competition. There's also a cute Spectator option, featuring a computer race of which you are the 'director', with the potential to mix and match camera angles to create your own fantasy Grand Prix.

But the game only really begins to crackle in Championship mode, with an extensive - a really really extensive - recreation of an entire [2001] season. After selecting a team/driver, it's straight into the race weekend, with the option of taking several practice sessions (mainly to experiment with the car set up) before a timed qualifying run, followed by a warm-up and, finally, the race.

This is where it gets serious: blue, yellow and black flags, time penalties, strategic pit stops, audacious overtaking. As with most other aspects of the game, pit stop strategy can be customised before the race, with the pit crew advising via radio contact, when and where to pull in. Of course, you can ignore them but on longer tracks pushing the car to the limit will inevitably cost points. Everything looks and moves fine, with a solid, fog and pop-up-free depth to the zippy 3D. Still, only a hardcore masochist would think of



No, you can't slide round corners without braking.

//The game really crackles in Championship mode with its recreation of the full F1 season//

turning off the driver's aids. It's clear, but not that clear, and without those crucial bendy arrows telegraphing tight corners you'll be taking several unscheduled sightseeing trips across sludge and gravel. Control is sharp, although on anything other than cockpit view mode, the driving illusion wobbles slightly - with the cars appearing to turn on a bizarre, floating central axis.

As ever, analogue control is best, and there's the steering-wheel option which works extremely well. The competent two-player split-screen mode throws up the intriguing possibility of recreating a rudimentary arcade atmosphere by bolting two wheels side by side to a sturdy table and turning off the lights. And then hiring a surly man to smoke gratuitously in the corner.

Despite being the heart of the game, Championship mode can prove immensely trying to all but the most hardened F1 maniac, given the sheer lengths of race time and distance involved. Gaining a comfortable lead can turn out to be a double-edged advantage, as for the reasonably steady driver, it can mean enduring lap after lap of featureless track scenery with only the odd grassy rumble and a pit stop to break the tedium. Luckily, the designers have included an excellent Memory Card camera-saving option, which meticulously saves a driver's progress

THE ART OF WAVING

F1. So many special flags, so much time... But what the hell do they all mean?



Red
Stops the race before time.

Chequered
Ends the race.



Blue
Tells a driver he's about to be lapped, or tells him to let a car overtake - otherwise he'll be penalised for obstruction.



Yellow
Danger. No overtaking. Slow down or stop. Tick one box.



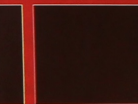
Green
End of danger. Go on, put your foot down, speedboat!



Red and yellow stripes
Slippery track (usually oil).



Black with an Orange Disc
Accompanied by a car number, it warns the driver that his car looks a bit knackered and he should head for his pit ASAP.



Black
Accompanied by a car number, it summons the driver to go to his pit immediately - normally to be instantly disqualified.

throughout a championship, comparing results to previous racers via three skill levels. There's also a superb, saveable replay system with the

option of re-examining sections of the race with more than one replay visible at a time, should you feel the need. For players whose idea of fun it is to finely craft their racing lines, peeling waffer-thin shavings off lap-times, Time Attack mode offers an exciting innovation: international competition. Lap times can be converted to codes which, when uploaded onto the Sony Web site, are sorted into a weekly leader board. And there's the perfect solution for those evenings where 15 F1 fans pop round: a 15-player, turn-based time-attack championship.

Formula One 2001 is the best Grand Prix game out there at the moment. Be warned, though: the game is meticulously weighted towards the sim side, and while F1 fanboys will froth for its authenticity, arcade racing speed freaks would be wise to look elsewhere. **Andy Lowe**

FORMULA ONE 2001

Why we'd buy it:
- Official and authentic
- Masses of options
- Intelligent save options

Why we'd leave it:
- Intriguing
- Poor commentary
- No 'engaging' factor

08

PlayStation 2 VERDICT



All the drivers from the 2002 season are here.

F1 2002

Tweaked and polished, EA returns with an F1 game for both spanner fetishists and Formula One virgins.

Publisher: EA Sports Developer: EA Sports
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Realism or fun? It's been a hard decision for developers of F1 titles over the years. The common view is that true authenticity just doesn't work. In the 2001 Spanish Grand Prix, Mika Häkkinen was anticipating his first win of the season, but disaster struck on the final lap. Engine failure gave him no option but to limp off the track just a few hundred metres away from achieving victory over Michael Schumacher. But how much fun is that? If it happened in a videogame, you'd be livid. So, does this mean that realism in games should be limited in order to avoid this kind of frustrating scenario?

We're of the opinion that authenticity is a worthy goal. We're not advocating complete mechanical meltdown on the start-grid but we do think that the slings and arrows of mechanical failures should be included to pep up the tension and add a minor but realistic element of chance to the experience. Thankfully, EA has delivered the most comprehensive F1 title currently available on PS2. Some might complain that it's an update that, at least visually, is near identical to last year's instalment, but F1 2002 has been tweaked and tuned to offer a more well-rounded interpretation of the sport this time round.

The game's greatest achievement is that it delivers an F1 experience that can be tailored to the player's skill level.



Four wheels good, two wheels bad. Collisions will be punished severely.



Schumacher rarely has to follow the pack.

Though most Grand Prix games have included options such as opponent skill level, tyre wear and fuel usage, F1 2002 delivers much more: mechanical failures, the full FIA rules (including all the flag penalties) and dynamic variable weather. This means that the casual Formula One fan can get straight into the game and begin out-performing the likes of Juan Pablo Montoya with a less intense arcade-style setup, while the true F1 aficionado will also feel that their beloved sport is being treated with the gravity it deserves.

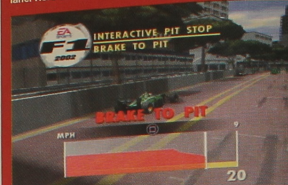
The authenticity even stretches to include slipstreaming and simulation handling. Select the latter and



Always expect rain at the British Grand Prix.

PENALTY PIT-STOP

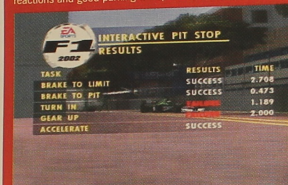
Turn on the full FIA rules and you can be penalised for a number of infringements, including speeding in the pit lane. Here are some dos and don'ts:



Upon first entering the pit-lane, it's vital to reduce your speed to 50mph by pressing the deceleration button. Fail to meet this target and you could be cautioned again.



After reducing your speed again (to 120mph) you must turn into the space that's attended by your team's pit crew. Quick reactions and good parking will speed up the process.



Once all the repairs and tyre changes have been made, quick acceleration out of the pit lane is vital to keep your track position. You will get an assessment of your pit performance.

//The casual F1 fan can get straight into the action and begin out-performing Juan Montoya//

racing becomes incredibly tough with wheels locking under hard braking and the slightest movement on to the grass sending your vehicle into an uncontrollable spin. Hardcore F1 fans will be pleased to hear that it's even possible to establish a pit strategy before the race begins. This can include either a one- or two-stop plan that can prove crucial in securing valuable championship points.

The only criticisms of F1 2002 are that it's hardly the most visually resplendent driving game on PS2 (*Gran Turismo* still beats it by a mile) and the frame rate, while as good as any other F1 title, is not as slick as we'd hoped. But for enthusiasts, this game offers the most detailed depiction of the Formula One circus to date.

Mark Walbank

F1 2002

Why we'd buy it:
- All the 2002 rules
- Fully customisable
- For veterans and newbies

Why we'd leave it:
- You've already played too many F1 games
- Frame rate ludders

07

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

F1 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON 2000

Confused by the countless F1 games available on PSone? The PS2 deluge starts here...



Keep driving like this and loose wheels or damaged suspension will no doubt occur.

Publisher: EA Sports Developer: EA Visual Sciences Price: £44.99
Players: 1-4 (22 in Time Trial) Out: Now

Another year, another starting grid packed with F1 sims. Publishers keep churning out the same 22-car, 16- (occasionally 17-) race scenario, presumably assuming no one will notice. How do you tell F1 games apart? In reality, most people don't bother anymore.

This entry offers the usual one race, custom and full championship settings. There's also a multiplayer selection for one- to four-player split-screen antics as well as a turn-based Time Trial for up to 22 players, should you ever decide to host an F1 party.

Commonplace in F1 games is the ability to tweak particular aspects of racing. While Quick Race may only enable limited control over these, championship races allow for more tinkering. At a mainstream level, basic downforce, suspension and gearbox options are offered, but eventually ride height, tyre selection, brake intensity and bias get thrown into the mix. It's still nothing to trouble the intricacy of the setup screens found on the average PC F1 sim, but then this isn't driving at that market.

Indeed, the driving dynamics, even with the assists turned off, are very newcomer-friendly - you can leave braking very late, throw the cars into bends with obscene severity and only when you step off the black stuff or violently bounce across a curb does the back end ever try to make its way to the front. True, in the wet things get

The split-screen mode offers decent four-player fun.



a little trickier but only because the analogue sensitivity range of the accelerator is inadequately short, making it difficult to balance the throttle around corners.

Graphically, things are more impressive. There's pleasing attention to detail and once damage is switched on, body parts fly realistically. The AI is such that most of the time the CPU opposition will do its best to avoid contact, even giving up a corner if it means a potential crash (cars will compete for positions, though, but don't convey the personalities of real drivers).

There's some occasional slow-down, but it's only momentary. More frustrating is the fact the weather doesn't appear to be dynamic. Odd, too, the braking - they bite like a bulldog at over 100mph, yet take a ludicrous amount of time to stop you at 30. But ultimately, *F1 Championship Season 2000*'s biggest predicament is that it offers nothing of any significance over rival F1 titles. ■ ■ João Diniz Sanches

F1 CHAMPIONSHIP SEASON 2000

Why we'd buy it:
- Attention to detail
- Sense of speed
- Damage well utilised

Why we'd leave it:
- No real innovation
- A manufactured feel
- Frame rate problems

06

PlayStation 2 NERDICT



Both car models and scenic detail are disappointingly lacking in detail.



The exaggerated car dynamics in the wet may see you involved in many of these.

F1 RACING CHAMPIONSHIP

Yes, another game with a F1 licence. But does anything set it apart from the rest of the grid?

Publisher: Video System Developer: Ubi Soft
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Why do all publishers insist on focusing on the latest teams, stats and circuits when they know everyone else is doing the same? Wouldn't it make more sense to offer something with a little more character? What about exploring the Turbo Years of the mid-Eighties: a time of massive slick tyres, ridiculous engine capacity and insane acceleration?

At least *F1 Racing Championship* tries to do something with its arrangement. Next to the Arcade, Single GP race and Time Trial elements there are Championship and Scenario alternatives that require certain criteria to be met before access is granted. For instance, the driving school option (similar to GTs) has to be completed before you're ready for Championship entry. Additionally, taking part in season specific scenarios isn't possible until you finish a certain number of tracks in the points. Not revolutionary, but it makes a change.

In terms of graphics the competition is already ahead. Car detail is basic and

trackside objects could benefit from more polygons (although there are nice touches such as camera flashes from the crowd).

Once the red lights are off, the weight of the steering may initially surprise you. It allows for smoother control than the overly twitchy nature of most F1 racers and is equally suited to a digital or analogue set up. Less impressive is the sluggishness of the acceleration - not good in an F1 game. Handling wise, while on dry tarmac things are fairly pick-up-and-play with a forgiving approach, the dynamics are nevertheless unrefined, aptly demonstrated by the overemphasised skidding once the rain comes down.

While the Artificial Intelligence won't win any awards, it is reasonable. Other drivers acknowledge your presence in a more subtle manner than EA's counterpart and generally get round the track competitively. Ultimately, though, this is average Formula One videogame territory. Despite one or two structural trinkets, you've no doubt seen it all before. ■ ■ João Diniz Sanches

F1 RACING CHAMPIONSHIP

Why we'd buy it:
- Progressive scenarios
- Detailed presentation
- Replay options

Why we'd leave it:
- Frame rate problems
- Unresponsive throttle

05

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

Get the lowdown on all the PS2's arcade racers. Offering blistering speed, reckless handling and absolutely no need to tweak your gear ratios.

P 44 STUNTMAN

The Hollywood stunt-'em-up that actually encourages you to smash your car up in a variety of fascinating ways.

P 49 CRAZY TAXI

Sega's arcade classic brings you all the fun of being in a fast-moving cab without the casual racist banter!

P 50 BURNOUT

Exhilarating urban racer for when you absolutely have to drive the wrong way down a dual carriageway.

P 52 SPY HUNTER

If only all cars fired missiles and turned into boats.

P 53 TWISTED METAL: BLACK

Chaotic car carnage in post-apocalyptic hell.

P 54 RUMBLE RACING

OTT racer with ramps, power-ups and short cuts-a-plenty.

P 55 SMUGGLER'S RUN 2

High speed, mission-based cops 'n robbers fun.

P 56 CIRCUS MAXIMUS

Christ, not another Roman chariot racing game!

P 57 RIDGE RACER V

More flashy, powerslide-fastic racing from Namco.

P 57 TEST DRIVE OVERDRIVE

Illegal street race-themed speedster with funky cars.

P 58 CART FURY

Typically unrestrained carting action from Midway.

P 58 DOWNFORCE

Urban F1 racing. Not quite as daft as it sounds.

P 59 LOTUS CHALLENGE

In which the Lotus is 'challenged' by a poor 3D engine.

P 59 TG DARE DEVIL

Burn around a variety of cities collecting, erm, coins.?



Is this where we use the shockingly inappropriate Princess Diana caption?



Here's a clue: You're not in the helicopter.



Have these fellas ever heard of the 'laws of physics'?

STUNTMAN

Lights! Camera! Traction! It's time to find out if a career as a Hollywood Fall Guy is all cunning stunts or crashing boredom.

Publisher: Atari Developer: Reflections
Price: £39.99 Players: 1 Out: Now

When you think of stunts you may well think of those wham-bam TV shows that get aired on a Saturday afternoon when everyone's waiting for the footy results. Shows like *The World's Greatest Stunts!* or *When Stunts Go Bad* (from the same people that brought you *The World's Scariest Police Chases* and *When Flamingos Attack!*). What these sensationalist schedule-fillers have in common is that they take you behind the scenes on movie set-pieces. They might reveal how the car chase from *Bullitt* was filmed, or analyse just how much work went into setting up the memorable Mini Cooper getaway in *The Italian Job*. And there's always footage of a jam-packed US stadium stunt-a-thon, where a costumed daredevil drives a rocket-powered Pontiac into a stack of burning cars. The crazy bastard.

These shows let you see what it's like to be a stuntman, allowing you to appreciate the CGI-free organisation and human precision that goes into making movie mayhem a reality. Aiming for something a little different after *Driver*, Reflections now brings all this car-flipping, bus-skidding,

bike-crashing excitement to the PS2 in the shape of *Stuntman*. Obviously, because of the developer's automotive expertise, the game sticks to stunts involving ground vehicles. But what you do get are car chases through London, tank-driving in the desert and bridge-jumping in the American Mid-West. *Stuntman* is a beautifully assembled homage to the film industry's most dangerous trade.

Consequently, this is a driving game with a difference. Unlike the *Driver* series, it's not a 'drive-anywhere' type of game. Donning the flameproof suit of a stunt driver, you're



//This is a beautifully assembled homage to the film industry's most dangerous trade//

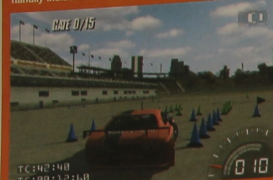
dared to complete a series of increasingly demanding vehicular challenges in a series of limited locations. Your efforts will then be spliced together into a film action sequence and eventually into an atmospheric movie trailer. Do your job well and you'll get to work on a movie with a higher budget and more complicated, lengthy stunts. Those of you who still have nightmares about your driving test should be prepared for a terrifying trip down memory lane.

Stuntman revolves around three main modes – the Stunt Constructor and Driving Game options are there to



TEST DRIVE?

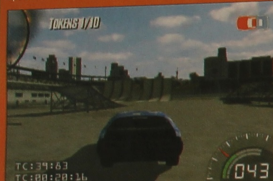
You can never have too much practice. *Stuntman* has handy included three Driving Games to hone your skills.



The Precision Test
Master your vehicle handling and perfect those three-point turns. Watch out for the cones, though!



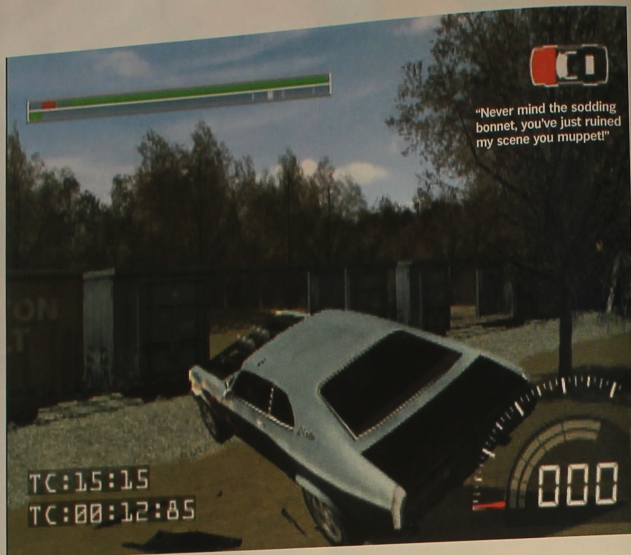
The Speed Test
Speed is essential for making stunts look good. Beat the clock.



Stunt Test
Work on your ability to negotiate those obstacles at speed. Steady now.

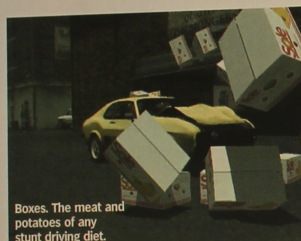
offer instant pick-up-and-play action. We'll come to these later. First you'll need to complete some of the challenges in the Career mode. While the game retains the feel of the *Driver* series – smooth and easy handling, striking 3D – the way you play the game is very different. The Career mode is split into six sections, with each section presented as a fictitious film. In each one the player needs to complete a number of stunt sequences, including jumps and skidding close to explosions, performing handbrake U-turns and smashing through those piles of cardboard boxes that movies are so fond of. Each stunt sequence is an obstacle course. A preview shows you which mini-stunts are involved in the overall sequence and the position of these manoeuvres (hit boxes here, slide into the alley over there, etc) are indicated on-screen by large yellow icons.

Egged on by the director, you race against a time limit to complete the stunt sequence. Checkpoints ensure that you keep your speed up, while directional arrows pop up to

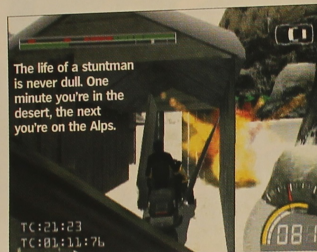


"Never mind the sodding bonnet, you've just ruined my scene you muppet!"

TC:15:15
TC:00:12:05



Boxes. The meat and potatoes of any stunt driving diet.



The life of a stuntman is never dull. One minute you're in the desert, the next you're on the Alps.

TC:21:03
TC:01:11:76

point you from stunt to stunt. An objective bar at the top of the screen displays your overall progress. Miss too many manoeuvres and the director won't be able to get the shot he wants. He'll yell "Cut!" and you'll have to start the sequence over. Almost perfect driving is required – you can't be too slow, wreck your car or take a wrong turn. After every effort, a replay option shows you how you performed. Like the *Driver* replays, they're shown from a number of different camera angles.

From your very first stunt (a seemingly simple car chase through East London) you should be prepared for uncompromising action. It's in these early stages that you begin to understand a stuntman's responsibilities on set and the skills involved. Stuntmen need to get their stunts in the bag first time – film is precious. Thankfully, the game is more forgiving. Fail to hit just the right box or to take the right corner and you'll get an earful from the director before the stunt is reset. This is where frustration can creep in. But

it's here you'll learn the concentration and the skills that'll see you through the rest of your challenges. Each movie features up to five separate stunt sequences, with each sequence consisting of over ten individual stunt elements. Each movie also ends with an arena-based one-off stunt that must also be completed before you can pass onto the next film project.

AND THAT'S A WRAP

As for the movies themselves, it's not hard to see where the developers have drawn their inspiration. The first mission, 'Toothless in Wapping', is obviously inspired by Brit gangster flicks like Guy Ritchie's *Lock, Stock And Two Smoking Barrels*. It's all old skool, East London motoring; close calls around the docks, handbrake turns in warehouses and chases through busy streets. Complete this and you fly to the US to work on 'A Whoopin' and a Hollerin' – full of the moonshine-inspired tomfoolery of *The Dukes Of Hazzard*

It's tough to tell how well you've performed on a stunt. The replays can sometimes be pretty cringeworthy. Here's one of our efforts:

ANATOMY OF A STUNT: THE CORKSCREW



1. Start by taking a nice leisurely drive to prepare yourself for the stunt. So far so good.

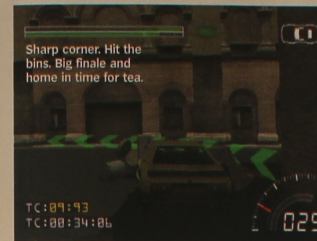
2. Hit the jump. Be careful not to undercook it though or you'll be extracting gravel from your radiator for ages.

3. Break through the fence, avoiding the cops, and get back on track.

4. Miss the turn and go head-first through the old barn. Try to correct yourself before the director notices.

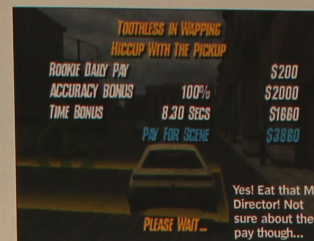
5. This is it. You need to be moving quickly but simply trying to keep it straight on the dusty road is a nightmare.

6. Nice corkscrew. You made it. Better hope you did it all correctly or you'll have to go through that again.



Sharp corner. Hit the bins. Big finale and home in time for tea.

TC:07:43
TC:00:34:06



TOOTHLESS IN WAPPING
HICCUP WITH THE PICKUP

ROOKIE DAILY PAY
ACCURACY BONUS 100%
TIME BONUS 8.20 SECS
PAY FOR SCENE

\$200
\$2000
\$1680
\$3880

Yes! Eat that Mr. Director! Not sure about the pay though...

PLEASE WAIT...



There's often more going on than you've got time to look at. Make sure you keep 'em peeled on the road, mind.

TC:12:03
TC:00:06:46

and *Smokey And The Bandit*. Expect dusty country tracks, mad police chases and a killer corkscrew jump finale that's right out of *The Man With The Golden Gun*.

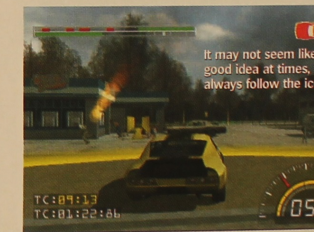
Then it's off to the Orient and a job on the John Woo-inspired action-thriller 'Blood Oath' – complete with helicopter versus Tuk-Tuk roof-top stunts and desperate chases through the twisting, narrow backstreets of Hong Kong. From here, Hollywood comes-a-calling and you're signed up to do the dangerous driving on a Clancy-esque thriller called 'Conspiracy'. Set around a secret base in the Alps, you'll perform fast and furious snowmobile chases across the slopes and even through hotels. The scenery may be icy, but the action's red hot.

Film number five is the *Indiana Jones*-like 'Scarab of Lost Souls', which lets you loose in tanks and jeeps. Finally, it's on to Monaco for 'Live Twice for Tomorrow' – the Bond-styled finale. At this point you've done everything that's been asked of you and you should be up to the challenge of the winding mountain roads, stolen stealth fighters and turbo-charged sports cars.

Just as each stunt sequence ends with a glossy TV-style replay, each of the six movies ends with a cinematic trailer, splicing together your best stunt work with pre-rendered character cut-scenes. It's your reward for stylish driving and perfect timing.

KEEPING IT REAL

To create the optimum level of realism in *Stuntman*, Reflections sought out the keen eye and technical mind of stunt legend Vic Armstrong. Armstrong appears in the *Guinness Book Of World Records* as the planet's most



It may not seem like a good idea at times, but always follow the icons.

TC:04:17
TC:01:22:06

//Every mechanical part and panel can be torn off, dented, shattered or set on fire//

prolific stuntman and in his long career he's doubled for James Bond and Indiana Jones, worked on the likes of *Superman: The Movie*, *A Bridge Too Far* and *Return Of The Jedi*, and is currently occupied with the latest Bond movie, *Die Another Day*. This guy knows his stuff.

Reflections brings its extensive knowledge of damage modelling and car physics to the mix. All of the vehicles in the game have been modelled in extraordinary detail. The cars will shred spectacularly if you zig when you should have zagged. Every panel and mechanical part (including

EXTRA VEHICULAR ACTIVITY

There are plenty of cars available to destroy with your crazy stunt antics – plus a fair few to unlock if you're good enough. Here are just a few.



1. If you ever wanted to be one of the cool kids in school, now's your chance with this Capri-like model. Nice colour.



2. Strange and unwieldy, the nippy little Tuk-Tuk will have you laughing and crying all at the same time.



3. It looks hard as nails and steers like a cow. A big mound of applause for the desert tank.



4. You'll have to wade pretty deep into the *Stuntman* sea to get hold of this beast. Believe us, all that hard work is worth it.

the engine block) can be torn off, dented, shattered or set on fire. Wheels can also fall off at unfortunate moments and, if you don't drive quickly enough, you'll find out just what happens

when a car hits a train head-on. Watching as your vehicle tumbles uncontrollably, its bodywork violently stripped to the chassis, is one of the things that makes crashing in *Stuntman* so bloody enjoyable. This attention to realism also extends to the handling of the vehicles, from the difference in responsiveness between a monster truck and a Tuk-Tuk, to the loss of traction on a dusty road and a skid on ice. In terms of vehicle mechanics, *Stuntman* is close to perfect.

As you progress in the Career mode, your stunt successes allow you to unlock cars and equipment for use

SNEAK PEEK: DRIVER 3

If tearing it up around the world's biggest movie lot doesn't quite fill you up here's a little taster of Reflections' next project. Make way for Driver 3.



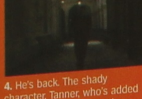
1. We open on a sleeky Miami strip and instantly know we're back on familiar ground.



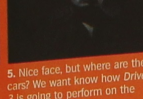
2. Not stopping there, we're taken on a whistle stop tour including Istanbul and Nice, exotic.



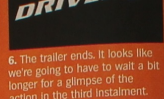
3. Beautiful cityscapes have always been a trademark of this ace series.



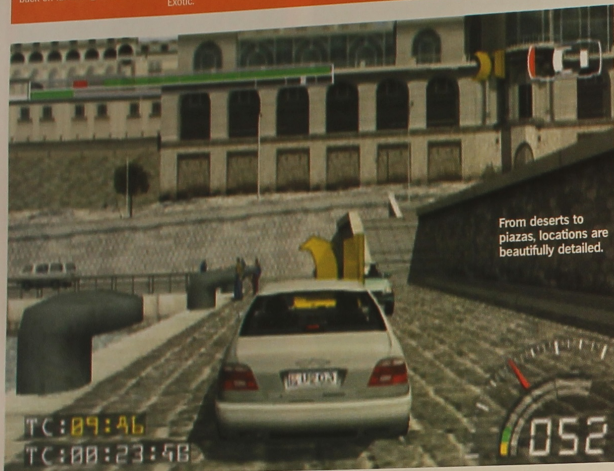
4. Here's back the shady character, Tanner, who's added that little bit of edge to the experience.



5. Nice face, but where are the cars? We want know how Driver 3 is going to perform on the road, dammit.



6. The trailer ends. It looks like we're going to have to wait a bit longer for a glimpse of the action in the third instalment.



From deserts to piazzas, locations are beautifully detailed.

In the Stunt Constructor mode, this vehicular sand-box allows you to design and execute your own outlandish stunts. Set in a giant American arena, you can use the cars and the toys you have unlocked to build giant ramps, Evel Knievel-style car jumps, or to arrange 100 metres of smashable boxes. Watch out for the steam cannon here (it fires cars), the incredible loop-the-loop track segments and the flaming hoops. Admittedly, you can't stage stunts on as grand a scale as the main game does. But the Stunt Constructor mode is a good chance to practise stunts with a freedom of movement that's noticeably absent from the closely-controlled Career levels.

Alongside the Stunt Constructor mode, *Stuntman* also features a set of Driving Games. These take place in the same arena and challenge you to collect spinning tokens or to perform feats of speed or precision over extreme obstacle courses. They're fun as a short practice area or as a place to let off some steam. They might even help you to hone your skills for the stunts in the main game. Both the



Just another day in the life of a driving instructor....

//A Stunt Constructor mode allows you to design your own outlandish stunts//

Stunt Constructor and the Driving Games also add some welcome longevity to *Stuntman* – even though the main Career mode is long enough (and hard enough) as it is. With helicopters and tanks shooting at you, and high speed chases during city rush hours, *Stuntman* has plenty for you to get excited about. The value of filmmaking as a game tool is clear in the way that a myriad of music, stunt and car types have been crammed into the game. Old and new cars have been mixed, and scenery changed in a way that doesn't require ridiculous plot development. Each level has its own energy and a real sense of style. A brief documentary-style intro to each stunt sequence by a CGI stuntman is educational: spelling out what elements of a forthcoming stunt you should look out for and how real stuntmen prepare for such tasks.

You're unlikely to steam through the levels in *Stuntman* and so this may not be a game for anyone who has a low tolerance for maddening frustration. In essence, you're driving a series of obstacle courses until you get them exactly right. At times, you can make a breakthrough and get to the end of the stunt only to mess up the finale. Or worse still, you'll complete the stunt only for the director to fail you for not being accurate enough. *Stuntman*'s gameplay is all about failing and using the knowledge gained in a bad run to do better next time. Progression can be slow. But there's a great sense of achievement when you finish a sequence, receiving equipment and cars for the Stunt Constructor and watching the replay in breathless silence. Despite the repetition, the game has that all-important 'just one more go' feeling.

At *Stuntman*'s heart lies an extraordinary simulation and

DON'T TRY THIS AT HOME!

Tired of taking the Director's orders? Well, take to the Stunt Arena and trash some cars to entertain the crowd. May we suggest a selection of the 'Special' toys?



The Steam Cannon
This will launch your car into the smashable item of your choice. Or the ground if you prefer.



Loop-The-Loop
It's easier than it looks, just don't panic when you're upside down and can't see where you're going.



The Ring Of Fire
Always a crowd pleaser, this. Particularly good when combined with a big ramp. Just don't mention any curry gags.

its subject matter, its impressive graphics and subtle sense of humour combine to make a hugely enjoyable game. At worst it can be tooth-grindingly frustrating. At best it's addictive, challenging and rewarding. Overall, this is a refreshingly original package that really justifies its price tag.

Mark Wyatt

STUNTMAN

Why we'd buy it:
- Takes the driving game to new levels
- Just one more go... please!

Why we'd leave it:
- As demanding and linear nature can be a bit much
- Sometimes frustrates



PlayStation 2 NERDICT

PRODUCT PLACEMENT

How many corporate logos can you spot?

If ever there was a game that paraded as a walking advert, *Crazy Taxi* is it. As well as all the fictional destinations dotted around the San Francisco-alike city, customers are always asking to be taken to haunts such as the Original Levi Shop, KFC, Pizza Hut, Fila or Tower Records. What next – Lara advertising fizzy glucose drinks? Pah!



1. Original Levi Shop
One of the first places to visit, the Levi shop actually has its main offices in San Fran.



2. KFC
The colonel is glad you dropped in for a bucket but not too happy about the smashed windows.



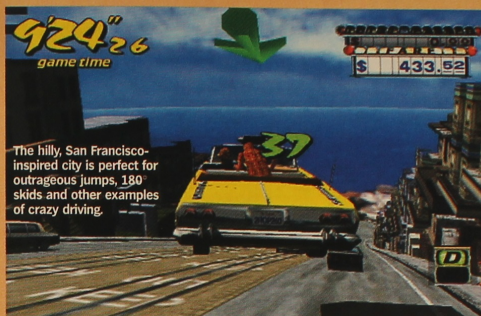
3. Pizza Hut
Earn some extra money by delivering pizzas. Now that would have been a good idea.



4. Fila
Crazy Taxi shows its age here – does anybody still wear Fila? [Schoolly D does! – Old Skool Edit]



5. Tower Records
Pop in and buy a better soundtrack if *Crazy Taxi*'s diet of So Cal punk-lite begins to annoy you.



The hilly, San Francisco-inspired city is perfect for outrageous jumps, 180 skids and other examples of crazy driving.



"Yep, hop in... but no puking on the leather seats, mind."

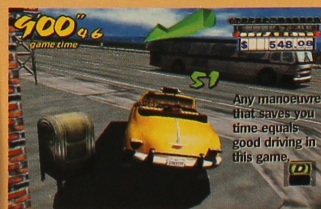
CRAZY TAXI

If your destination is 'inspired driving thrills' Sega's arcade classic is the cab firm you should be calling.

Publisher: Acclaim Developer: Acclaim/Sega
Price: £19.99 Players: 1 Out: Now

Hey hey, come on over, have some fun with *Crazy Taxi*! Those immortal words, spoken by some over-enthusiastic voice artiste, sum up what is so great about this madcap game. It's just incredibly good fun. Exercising complete mastery over the 'just one more go' factor, *Crazy Taxi* is a pure gaming rush complete with OTT handling, vibrant visuals and a totally appropriate soundtrack courtesy of Blink 182 and The Offspring.

The concept is simplicity itself: you collect passengers and take them where they want to go within the time limit. Of course, the roads are full of traffic to avoid and finding your way to the destinations can be tricky, despite the helpful green arrow. Another dimension is added by a tipping system for prompt delivery and crazy driving along the way, as well as the colour coding system: punters have different colours depending on how far they want to travel – the further the distance the bigger the cash reward.



Any manoeuvre that saves you time equals good driving in this game.



When the customer said "Take me to the beach," he probably wasn't being this literal...

Set in a San Francisco-esque city, there's plenty of opportunity to pull off dangerous stunts, such as swerving wildly close to traffic (Crazy Through), or leaping off conveniently positioned ramps (Crazy Jump). After a bit of practice the Crazy Dash can be mastered – providing a hurtling speed boost which is an essential part of your driving armoury if you really want to bring in the money.

For the home version, Sega thoughtfully provided a Crazy Box full of insanely addictive mini-games. These range from variations on the passenger deliveries to such delights as Crazy Balloon (pop balloons with your motor) and Crazy Bowling (use the taxi as an elongated bowling ball, all of which help to hone key driving skills that are vital for success in the main game. After finishing these challenges you're guaranteed to keep playing them for months on end attempting to get ever higher scores.

To aid longevity even further a whole new city has

been included. As with the Arcade City, this is based on 'Riscio' but it requires a bit more practice before it can be mastered due to its more intricate layout [meaning the directional arrow is no longer quite so useful]. But then, the joy of tear-arsing around not entirely certain of where you're going and constantly on the look out for new short

//Imagine speeding down a tunnel playing chicken with a train and you'll get the idea//

cuts is a major part of *Crazy Taxi*'s considerable charm. Imagine speeding down a subway tunnel playing chicken with an express train and you'll get the idea.

Still, it's not all sunshine and light. Despite the extra stuff thrown in, this game won't last forever. You'll play it loads to begin with then, because of the repetitive nature of the gameplay, gradually start going back to it less and less. But at some point in the future you'll rediscover it in a forgotten drawer, play it again and find yourself unable to stop. This is undiluted arcade magic and no matter how crazy you think your driving is, there's always room to become even crazier. Taxi ■ Rhys Mumford

CRAZY TAXI

Why we'd buy it:
- It's a classic
- Some of the best arcade action on PS2

Why we'd leave it:
- It's gimmicky as hell
- Lacking new PS2 features
- Suffers from post-ap



PlayStation 2 NERDICT

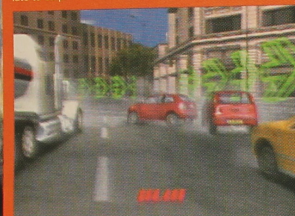
Lap: 1/1
Pos: 4/4

CRASH COURSE

Burnout truly gets going when you grind to a halt. That's because a lot of effort has gone into making crashing a crucial part of the experience. Here's how it works:



1. You're hurtling towards an oncoming vehicle and it's too late to stop!



2. You smash into the car and the action spins into a slow-motion replay showing the impact from a smattering of blood-curdling angles.



3. Then you check out the incident in Replay mode after the race, morbidly zooming and rotating the camera for maximum detail.



4. Once you're satisfied that your mates will be drooling over this one, save the crash to Memory Card and show it off round their place.

9

Timer: 1:1

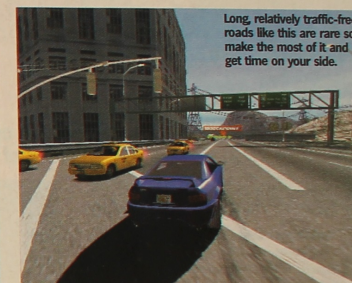
Time running out and a cavalcade of cars between you and the checkpoint... FLOOR IT!

Oncoming Traffic: 59m

73 MPH



Two-player action is suitably frenetic and comes without even a hint of slowdown.



Long, relatively traffic-free roads like this are rare so make the most of it and get time on your side.

BURNOUT

So you've put GT3 on the back-burner... Why not try Acclaim's adrenaline-soaked, metal-twisting arcade racer for an exciting change of pace? If your opponent doesn't get you, the oncoming traffic just might!

Publisher: Acclaim Developer: Criterion
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Burnout gnaws at our Achilles heel, preying on our darkest fetishes; our love of speed, life-threatening danger and our peculiar compulsion for car crashes. The game is knuckle-crunchingly fast with detailed backdrops, skiddy handling and hairpin-free courses conspiring to convey a frightening sense of raw speed. The most thrilling element is the eponymous Burnout. Fill your power-up bar by dodging traffic and hold **RT** to feel your eyes widen as the scenery flashes by in the fabulous motion blur that accompanies your turbo boost.

For extra danger, the streets are busily peopled with vans and trucks going about their business, cars tootling along at 50mph and law-abiding citizens waiting at the lights. You must also contend with the filthy tactics of three AI opponents, so you'll have to divide your attention between reading the next crossroads, dodging the traffic and making sure you aren't shunted into a wall.

To progress you have to hit various checkpoints. Irrespective of your rivals' position, which is inevitably close. In fact, that proximity can prove frustrating when a crash

after a long, perfect section sees them belting past for the win as you crawl back up to cruising speed. The result is a familiar stomach-churning feeling for arcade veterans as you're ever-pushed to produce the perfect run. Such dangerous driving has an obvious and inevitable outcome: spectacular crashes. If you missed them in real-time they're immediately replayed in blood-curdling slow-motion showing every detail of your mangled, spinning car.

Despite the ramped-up crashes and astonishing physics, the name of the game is, of course, winning races by avoiding cars - and it's only when you master this that you truly begin to enjoy yourself. It's then that clever details pile on the performance pressure, such as the impressive particle effects as dust is thrown up from dirt sections and vision-obscuring smoke palls from crashes.

The gameplay may be straightforward, and the handling deliberately basic, but Burnout is not devoid of tactics. When you're toe-to-toe with a rival you can nudge them into other vehicles, or better still edge their car towards oncoming traffic. Also, there's a smattering of the other usual options to add variety. The Time Attack mode is

// Spectacular crashes are replayed in slow-motion showing every detail of your mangled car //

a mad rush to beat the clock through busy roads without opposing racers. The Two-player mode sees no drop in the integrity of the graphics and is often more satisfying to play than the main game, excluding as it does the mystifyingly similar performance of AI cars to your own.

If it's realism you crave - look elsewhere. If it's driving on the edge you're after, the line between heart-warming glory and heart-stopping disaster has never been thinner.

Lee Hall

BURNOUT

Why we'd buy it:
- Adrenaline rush of speed
- Spectacular crashes
- NOT a dull simulation

Why we'd leave it:
- Few original courses
- Reads on perfect run

08

PlayStation 2 VERDICT



Typical, the cars are equipped with multiple hi-tech weapons – then the baddies just come along and shunt you.

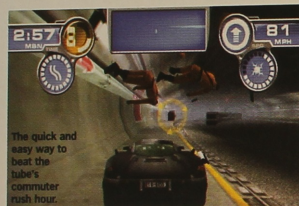
SPY HUNTER

So let's recap: this is a videogame based on an old videogame which, in itself, was a videogame interpretation of the James Bond movies...

Publisher: Midway Developer: Paradigm
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

It sometimes seems that good ideas exist to be nicked. Movies, music and games are all subject to that fine tradition known variously as the homage, the remake or the rip-off. But just as original ideas don't always set the world ablaze, occasionally revisiting the past can deliver something rather good. So it is with *Spy Hunter*, the spiritual successor to Midway's 1983 arcade legend – which single-handedly invented the driving shoot-'em-up and therefore can be blamed for everything from *WipeOut Fusion* (hooray!) to *Motor Mayhem* (Oops).

NOSTRA (the gentleman's club with ambitions of world domination and leather furniture) is about to launch the Four Horsemen Of The Apocalypse, a quartet of death affirming satellites. Only the International Espionage Section can stop this diabolical plan and, due to staff cut backs, this boils down to you and a bespoke gadget wagon known as the G-6155 Interceptor. Luckily your ultra-fast ride comes with upgradeable

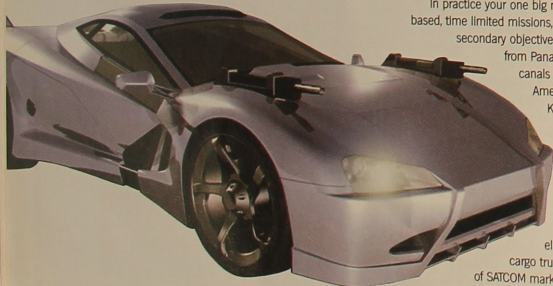


The quick and easy way to bust the tube's commuter rush hour.

//Each level is designed superbly, so revisiting missions to improve your performance is never a chore//

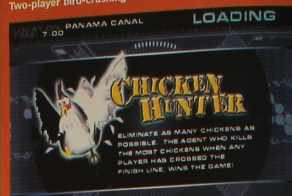
offensive and defensive weapons. What's more, drive the Interceptor into water and it mutates into a speedboat. Better still, each incarnation contains a single-seater escape vehicle which is launched when the damage racks up. For the boat there is an armoured Jet-Ski, while the car contains a mean ass motorbike.

In practice your one big mission equals 14 route-based, time limited missions, divided into primary and secondary objectives and set in sexy locations from Panama to the world famous canals of Dover. Well, this is an American game. Take the Florida Keys-based Swamp Venom mission for example. Your primary objective is to destroy a series of NOSTRA owned turbines polluting the local environment. Secondary objectives include preserving civilian life, electronically tagging NOSTRA cargo trucks and picking up a number of SATCOM markers. Now throw bomb



FOUL PLAY

Two-player bird-crushing madness in Chicken Hunter.



A fantastic bonus for progressing through *Spy Hunter* is this inspired, yet somewhat bizarre, two-player level which may well have animal rights activists foaming at the mouth.



The foul-squishing fun takes place on the Panama Canal level. Not only do you have to kick the chicks, you must also look out for sneaky attacks by the other player.



239 defenceless birds killed for nothing! Don't worry their steaming guts will probably be scraped off the road and made into kebab shop chicken nuggets.

dropping helicopters, gun towers and depth charge spilling speedboats into the mix and you have a surprisingly modern arcade experience.

Progressive missions are opened up only when you gain the requisite number of objective points and there are many ways to fall short. Yet each level is such a well-designed, tightly-coiled blast that revisiting incomplete missions to improve performance is never a chore. The developers have gone to great lengths to hide any linearity with multiple, often ingeniously hidden, routes. Combine that factor with the constantly replenished threats and the game's modest 14 level tally seems ample. The G-6155's clever controls make the juggling of guided missiles, lasers, electro-magnetic pulse gun and oil slicks a breeze.

There really is nothing else quite like *Spy Hunter* out there. True, it could be longer, but the quality of the experience is such that it's hard to find fault. This is arcade action as it's supposed to be. Fast, challenging and deeply addictive. A bit like a certain coin-op classic from way back when. ■ **Paul Fitzpatrick**

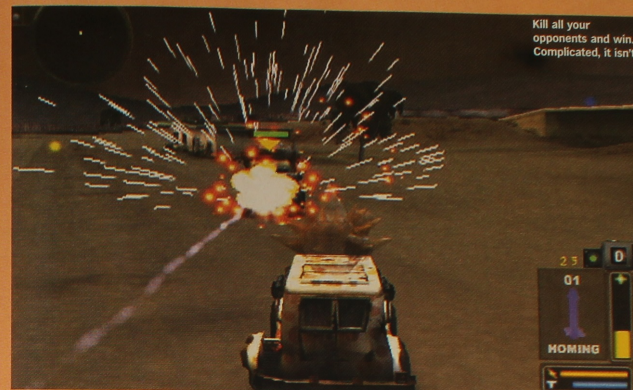
SPY HUNTER

Why we'd buy it:
• It's adrenaline-fueled fun
• You get to blow things up!
• Nitro... Chicken Hunter.

Why we'd leave it:
• You can only do one thing at a time
• You don't 'do' retro



PlayStation 2 VERDICT



Kill all your opponents and win. Complicated, it isn't.

TWISTED METAL: BLACK

There's been a nuclear war, so what do the survivors do? Drive around killing each other of course...

Publisher: SCE Developer: IncoG Inc
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-4 Out: Now

All things considered, a teenager growing up in the Eighties had it pretty damn bad. Some would argue it was a time of great musical developments and a rich period in terms of popular culture (they'd be wrong though). But socially, and politically, they sucked big time. For any child of that decade – and it's a fair bet that includes the majority of today's game designers – the threat of nuclear war hung over everything.

Heck, for every episode of *The A-Team* or *Manimal*, there were two new dramas or documentaries or public information films dealing with the topic of WWII. *Threads*. *The Day After*. *When The Wind Blows*... It's little wonder that the constant threat of global destruction left its mark on the pop culture of today.

Unfortunately, much in the same way that we're all a bit blasé about nuclear war itself, the post-apocalyptic videogame has become something of an over-used theme. *Twisted Metal: Black* is one long cliché, from its ravaged cityscapes, to its irradiated oil fields. But, like the heroin addicted rock star, clichés can still be rather wonderful.

The previous *Twisted Metal* games were great. Admittedly, they won few awards, and annoyed many with their lack of pretentiousness, but as far as vehicle-based mayhem goes, they don't get much more mayhem-laden. Until now. On the most basic level, *Twisted Metal: Black* is the same game as its forebears. The bottom line gameplay and structure has not changed one iota. Choosing to go for a quick one-off bout of combat, the debilitating Endurance mode, or the level and vehicle-unlocking 'story' game, you simply pick your chariot, select your level, and get stuck in with blowing merry heck out of a number of opponents across power-up-laden arenas of varying sizes. Complicated brain science it ain't. What it is, however, is a PlayStation 2 game, and to that end while *Twisted Metal: Black* may do everything that its predecessors did, it does them bigger, faster and more impressively.

The vehicles are the usual mix of comic book excess, with each having its own special attack and beat-'em-up



Multiplayer carnage is typically good fun. "You've bombed me you shit!"

// TM:B does everything its predecessors did only bigger, faster and more impressively//

Inspired special moves, in addition to the standard missiles and cannons. However, while it's agreeable to freeze your opponents, catapult religious fanatics through windscreens, or launch missile salvos from orbiting satellites, the real joy is in the exploration of TM:B's absurdly large levels.

Unlike the previous games, these levels are alive. The city stages are bristling with hapless pedestrians, and rush hour traffic, that frequently finds itself between you and your target. Think *Crazy Taxi* with bombs, and whacked off its nips on asbinte, and you'll have some idea of what to expect. In addition, fans of the series will be enraptured to hear that the scenery can still be torn up by your weapons, or used to hinder your opponents' progress, scrap metal crushers, and cliff edges both play their part for the wily combatant. Adding to this unexpected sense of strategy are the recharge stations. With health pick-ups hard to find, memorising the position of these energy ports is essential.

You might gather that *Twisted Metal: Black* is somewhat essential in Multiplayer mode – and it is. Few PS2 games manage to match its explosion-for-explosion, and bitter rivalries soon develop. The only disappointment

GUN METAL BLACK

Twisted Metal: Black boasts more than enough weaponry to satisfy even the most extreme psycho. Here are a few of our favourites.



Gas Can
It's a gas can. Only you propel it at speed towards your enemy. As painful as it sounds.

Rico
This razor-sharp disc can be bounced off scenery. The more it bounces, the more damage it does.



Zoomy
Launches a barrage of ten missiles. One of the most devastating weapons in the game.



Sat
Activating the Sat drops a storm of missiles upon an unsuspecting opponent's head.

Freeze
Traps an adversary in a block of ice, giving you time to line-up a truck-trashing attack.

is some slow-down when playing in Split-screen mode, a shame because the graphics are otherwise stunning. In Single-player mode there's no glitching, and no pop-up. Given the complexity of the levels, this is remarkable. When you factor in the speed of the game, it's a near miracle.

In fact, *Twisted Metal: Black* is so damn fast that it's almost to the detriment of the gameplay. Thanks to the useless radar, keeping track of an opponent is tricky at best. And when you're careering around the levels at something akin to 1,000 mph, it becomes almost impossible. Thank

heaven for homing missiles and lock-on machine guns. This isn't the only downside. Some of the levels are (deliberately) dimly lit. In addition, when storms blow up, the levels find themselves concealed behind some needlessly obscuring effects.

But hey, it'd be cruel to label *Twisted Metal: Black* as anything other than a big sack of post-apocalyptic hedonism. It's fast, it's stuffed with action and it's one of the most addictive multiplayer romps on your console. If it has managed to produce games like this, maybe that threat of nuclear war wasn't so bad after all.

■ **Paul Rose**

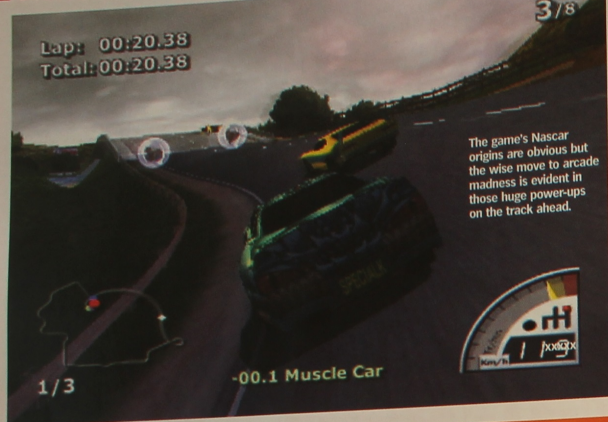
TWISTED METAL: BLACK

Why we'd buy it:
• It's fast, furious and GFI
• Plays The Rating Stories
• Pure Black of the best

Why we'd leave it:
• We may have already had our fill of Twisted Metal
• It does drive slow



PlayStation 2 VERDICT



The game's Nascar origins are obvious but the wise move to arcade madness is evident in those huge power-ups on the track ahead.

RUMBLE RACING

SSX with cars? Well, not quite, but EA's utterly deranged stock car smash-'em-up gets pretty damn close...

Publisher: Electronic Arts Developer: Electronic Arts
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Unbelievably, this game started life as a dull Nascar sim – and then it was changed. And how. Where once there was tedium of the highest order, now roars a title jammed to the molars with improbable ramps, massive courses, groovy shortcuts and competitor artificial intelligence that borders on the psychotic. There's also bewilderingly original track design [a Roman amphitheatre rubs happy shoulders with the neon dockland wonderland in Car Go] and there's playability afoot that begs extremes of back-breaking, pit-of-the-stomach-yawning stuntage.

One minute you're trundling along in a scrawly day-glo cartoon car called something like Widow Maker or Silver Streak, the next you're avoiding a bloody great cartoon bomb the size of a beachball. Boom! Suddenly you're soaring bonnet over brakepipes towards the horizon.

Like an anti-grav Wacky Races, charged to the piston rings with the laugh-out-loud elements of racers like Crazy Taxi, then lightly sprinkled with a fine dusting of SSX's head-over-heels mayhem, Rumble Racing pulls out all the



Mid-air collisions are a regular part of the action.

to fall back to the ground, is twice as much fun as using the ramps – and the real hidden joy of the game is discovering and then scuttling up as many of these nooks and crannies as possible. Oh, that and exploring at a fearsome rate of knots the fantastically adventurous selection of short-cuts which pepper the fifteen tracks in the rota.

As for the game itself, in one-player it's the standard Championship/Cup affair which opens up tracks ready and waiting for the outrageous Two-player mode. As for the

acrobatics, the key to success here lies in memorising which of the vehicles perform that triple salco front flip with ease and which ones are better suited to the roll, figure of

eight combos. The 'General Lee' bonnet-down/tailgate-up forward flip with a single left or right pike variant gracefully mixes a cocktail of style and danger, whereas doing a triple side roll and keeping the vehicle facing forwards is the less ballistic but safer option. There are, of course, a million maniac flips and mid-air spins in-between and you'll be up all night trying them or ducking in reflex as a competitor launches himself overhead in an unnecessary but breathtaking flurry of auto-contortion. It's racing Jim, but not as we know it.

Finally, any arcade racer wouldn't be worth its salt without a slew of needlessly violent power-ups. Cue car-

FLYING TONIGHT

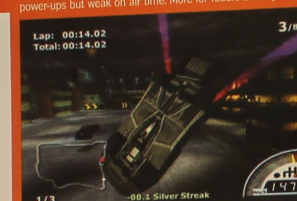
Those insane Rumble courses in close up...



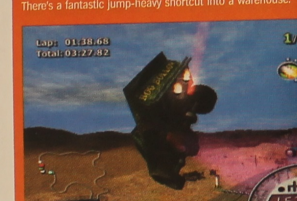
Flip Out
The easiest track on which to perfect crucial mid-air tricks as it's perforated with half-pipes and riddled with jumps.



True Grits
The simplest early outdoor track which is heavy on the power-ups but weak on air time. More for racers than flyers.



Car Go
Takes in the docklands and a partially submerged submarine. There's a fantastic jump-heavy shortcut into a warehouse.



Passing Through
An amazingly tortuous waterfall and cave enhanced circuit with a neck-breaking corkscrow drop.

flipping cow catchers, wheel-flaming super traction, a kind of snowball/custard splat grenade, oil slicks, invincibility, massive comedy bombs and the daddy of them all – a full size twister that picks up, sucks in and spits out all the opposition in one fell swoop. The more you play Rumble Racing the better it gets, until you wonder exactly what it was you did with your life beforehand. ■ **Iain White**

RUMBLE RACING

Why we'd buy it:
- It's fast
- It's hilariously enjoyable
- Also for arcade heads

Why we'd leave it:
- Does not complement a hangover
- Not for sim boxes

08

PlayStation 2 NERDICT



SMUGGLER'S RUN 2: HOSTILE TERRITORIES

It's a topical smuggling sim taking in war-torn corners of the world. But do special forces really drive beach buggies?

Publisher: Rockstar Games Developer: Angel Studios
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: November

How would you like to be a sneaky, low down, good-for-nothing smuggler making a living out of other people's misery in war-torn corners of the world? You would? Then *Smuggler's Run 2: Hostile Territories* is firing Exocets down your tail-pipe – taking the free-roaming, go-where-thou-wilt philosophy of its predecessor and maxing it out with bucket-loads of explosions, helicopters, tanks and all the other violent accoutrements of armed conflict.

The heavily mission-based premise of SR2 is that you're an agent of an international smuggling cartel. You visit remote conflict-ridden areas, drive a succession of all-terrain vehicles over harsh environments, pick up contraband and get paid for it. Sounds like an offer too good to refuse.

In time-honoured style, vehicles are unlocked as you succeed at the progressively more difficult missions. Kicking off with an underpowered buggy of the kind you'd find patrolling for sheep in the Australian outback, you slowly get to drive around the levels in ever slicker motors, including ridiculously fast quad-bikes and even an army half-track. The driving arenas (of which there are only two) are still the massive affairs that featured in the first



A swift dab of the brings up a handy real-time map.



The scope for derring-do and ludicrous stunts is huge.



Some missions take place at night or in truly godawful weather.



//You're involved in a high-speed life-or-death chase where the odds are stacked against you//

Smuggler's Run. And it's still possible to spot a mountain way off on the horizon and drive to it, giving the player the feeling of total immersion in the landscape.

These vast open spaces are populated with scores of enemy vehicles, all rather churlishly dedicated to

POSTCARDS FROM THE FRONT

Joy-riding, conflict zone-style. Watch out Kate Adiel



1. Mountain Pass
Lots of slippery-slidy lunacy is to be had on the snowy slopes of the now Russian mountains.

2. Vietnamese Village
Chortle as old men in conical straw hats throw themselves out of the way of your quad-bike.



3. Warehouse
Yikes! We've arrived at the party so early the DJ hasn't set up. Best slip out before we're spotted.



4. Railway Bridge
Trains plough around the landscape offering excellent opportunities for spectacular near-misses.

preventing you from succeeding in your mission, whether that be a simple pick-up-and-drop operation or something rather more complicated involving several legs of work. The AI of these vehicles is also sufficiently aggressive in a *Driver* kind of way [they're always trying to ram you] to keep you on your toes. New features in SR2 include droppable countermeasures (such as oil slicks and bombs) that you can use to distract pursuers, and a new rear-view mirror.

At its best, *Smuggler's Run 2* is unbeatable fun which really sells the idea that you're involved in a high-speed life-or-death chase across a foreign country where the odds

are stacked against you. If it has any drawbacks it's that the missions can become a little predictable on replay; enemies always start at the same places and tend to behave in much the same way every time. The more picky may also find that the missions become a little samey after a while. That said, SR2 is more solid enjoyment from an established series, especially in two-player mode. Anyone up for a quick booty call? ■ **Steve Faragher**

SMUGGLER'S RUN 2: HOSTILE TERRITORIES

Why we'd buy it:
- Fun-packed action
- Cardwaling frenzy
- Down in dirty atmosphere

Why we'd leave it:
- Seen it all before
- Repetitive enemy AI
- Wake playing GTAIV

07

PlayStation 2 NERDICT



"Erel that blokes customised his horses with monochrome stripes. The shit..."

CIRCUS MAXIMUS: CHARIOT WARS

Racing goes back in time... 27 centuries to be precise. To when drivers wore togas and horse power was meant literally.

Publisher: THQ Developer: Kodiak Interactive
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-4 Out: Now

New ideas are great and all too rare in videogames, so let's take a moment to raise a ragged cheer to everything that's good about *Circus Maximus* before we throw it to the lions of criticism. Take a racing game and cross it with a beat-'em-up. There, it's that simple. But like all great ideas, the simplicity is its genius. *Circus Maximus* puts you in charge of a two-man slay team who's mission it is to race faster and stab harder than anyone else.

There's an intensity to the game that's momentarily brilliant. As you struggle to keep your careering chariot on course while simultaneously launching savage attacks on your adjacent opponent, you'll feel a surge of unadulterated pleasure. The first time you cross the finish line ahead of your three battered and bloodied rivals, you'll enjoy a deep sense of satisfaction. Sadly, like many of the courses, it's all downhill from there.

The game's structure is familiar. Win races, collect prize money and unlock more courses from the 19 on offer until you reach the

ultimate arena, the *Circus Maximus* of the title. Winning races is simply a matter of crossing the finishing line first, a goal that is best achieved by reducing your opponent's hit-points to zero by smacking them or forcing them off the road (they do respawn, but lose time doing so). The courses are bumpy, cross-country affairs littered with obstacles (look out for that falling menhir!) and short-cuts that reward repeated play by unveiling their secrets. Forget Colin McRae – if you're after extreme rallying action, it doesn't get much tougher than this.

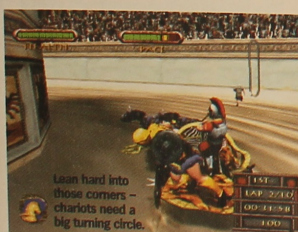
However, *Circus Maximus* is deeply flawed. It's one of those games that gets worse the further you progress. On the early courses you can forgive some of the game's less polished aspects because the racetracks are basic, driving your chariot while fighting is a doddle, and you can just sit back and concentrate on the excitement and the blood.

As you progress, though, you will be expected to sharpen up your driving skills; there are cliff edges to avoid, jumps to make and many more obstacles to dodge. While

//You struggle to keep your chariot on course while launching savage attacks on your opponents//



Time your gladiatorial blows as a rival chariot pulls up alongside.



Lean hard into those corners – chariots need a big turning circle.

SO BARBARIAN LIKE YOU

Adding some much-needed gameplay variety are the power-ups. Unfortunately, there are only five of them.



The lightning icon means that we've got the opportunity to throw our weapon at any chariots behind us. Can your mother sew? Well, stitch this...

The flames indicate that we're travelling at an increased speed in a humorously cartoon way. However, the effect wears off all too soon.

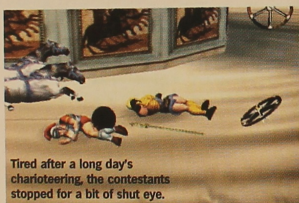


The crossed swords icon means that, for a short period, our attacks are doubled in their ferocity.



The shield power-up provides us with double our defensive power for a short period of time. Nice.

White-coloured power-ups are health revivers. Just the thing if you've recently been involved in a four-chariot pile-up on the *Enimius Oneis*.



Tired after a long day's charioteering, the contestants stopped for a bit of shut eye.

An increasing difficulty level is a good thing in theory. In this case it's tedious because the game becomes increasingly stop-start. And the fighting never really progresses beyond button-mangling either.

Circus Maximus will have you hurling your joystick across the room in frustration. What started out as an original spin on a genre, soon begins to look thin on ideas. While the odd deathmatch is thrown in (where the last man standing is the winner) the gameplay fails to develop, and after the initial thrill there's only so much sub-standard racing you'll want to experience. ■ Steve Faragher

CIRCUS MAXIMUS: CHARIOT WARS

Why we'd buy it:
- It's a new idea and deserves to be supported
- Fun for a few hours

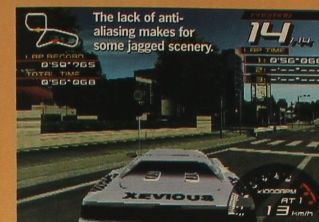
Why we'd leave it:
- Lacks polish
- Gets a bit boring a bit too quickly

06

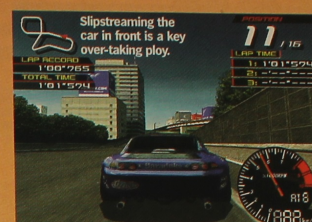
PlayStation 2 NERDICT

RIDGE RACER V

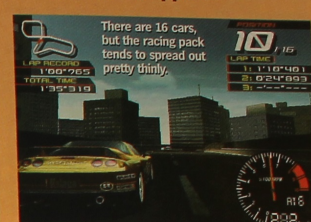
The fifth instalment in Namco's stylishly dressed series manages to both delight and disappoint.



The lack of anti-aliasing makes for some jagged scenery.



Slipstreaming the car in front is a key over-taking ploy.



There are 16 cars, but the racing pack tends to spread out pretty thinly.

Publisher: SCE Developer: Namco
Price: £19.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

First the good news. *Ridge Racer V* is fast. Very fast. It also looks great (most of the time) and it handles in an incredibly exciting fashion. It's probably exactly what you want from an arcade racing game. Like its predecessors before it, *Ridge Racer V* is a clinical arcade powerslide machine.

And satisfyingly, while other sheep-like developers drone 'realism, realism, realism' as they write their perfectly authentic, perfectly soulless driving games, Namco has gone right back to *Ridge Racer* handling basics. Forget physics – this is about skillfully using the brake and accelerator to pull off mesmerising slides and spins that simply do not exist in the real world. Even the concessions to realism – the improved AI which sees overtaken opponents lurking in your slipstream, and the gorgeous

visual effects (sparks off the chassis, glowing trails off the brake lights) are there merely to enhance the arcade thrills. *Ridge Racer V* doesn't want to be *Gran Turismo*.

But this is a flawed diamond, and the key problem is the lack of innovation. It seems Namco is so keen on previous classic *Ridge Racer* Type 4, that the development team has re-used the old game's handling model, and re-used its structure. Once again, cars, upgrades and tracks are unlocked by your performance in increasingly more challenging championships. This worked wonderfully in Type 4, but surely its big brother on PS2 should have been slightly more original – or at least expanded on a well-worn set-up.

And then there are the borders. Inch-wide black bars at the top and bottom of the screen – the heart-sinking sign of a rushed PAL conversion. This sense of haste is evident throughout the game. Jagged lines afflict every scenic line, a typical feature of early PS2 titles where anti-aliasing has

been a problem. Plus, the shoddy two-player mode shrouds everything in a thick fog. The focus is the one-player mode, of course, but it's a disappointment nonetheless.

All of which leaves us with a fun arcade racer that is let down by overly high expectations. The fact is, this is still one of the best handling, best-looking driving games around, but it's not the giant leap forward we were hoping for. *Ridge Racer V* is not great, it's not life altering, it's just plain, old-fashioned 'quite good'. ■ Dan Griffiths

RIDGE RACER V

Why we'd buy it:
- Sense of genuine speed
- Subtle handling
- Easy to pick up and play

Why we'd leave it:
- Bad PAL conversion
- Fogginess in two-player
- Some jagged edges

07

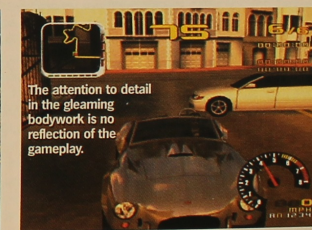
PlayStation 2 NERDICT

TO OVERDRIVE

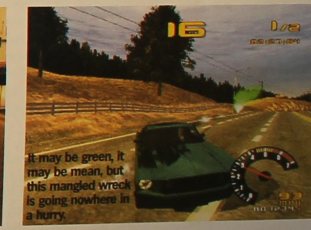
Live out your Vin Deisel fantasies in this *The Fast And The Furious* inspired illegal race romp.



If you want to win a race we wouldn't advise using the front-of-car view.



The attention to detail in the gleaming bodywork is no reflection of the gameplay.



It may be green, it may be mean, but this mangled wreck is going nowhere in a hurry.

Publisher: Infogrames Developer: The Pitbull Syndicate
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

The latest in the enduring *Test Drive* series, which made regular appearances on PC and PSone, *Overdrive* screams arcade so loudly it's a surprise the game doesn't come with a flat-packed teak cabinet and slot to shove coins in. Taking illegal street racing for moolah and pink slips as its theme, *Overdrive* is the chunky aftermath of a pile-up between *Driver*, *The Fast And The Furious* and a *Discovery Channel* documentary on muscle cars.

Aside from the usual suspects of Quick Race, Single Race and Two-player modes (which is great fast-paced fun, incidentally), the game's throbbing engine block is the Underground story mode. It's here that you get initiated into

an illegal racing society that will, victory and traffic cops permitting, take you from the Bullitt-flavoured streets of San Francisco to Tokyo, London and Monaco – all filled with familiar landmarks and made more beautiful by some lovely sunset effects. Tracks are linear and in the case of the throwaway Drag Race showdowns, short and very, very straight. The cars are a stirring bunch with Motor City USA throwing up the petrol-guzzling stars of the game. Once you've snagged first in the boat-like '67 Pontiac GTO or the '69 Chevy Camaro (both of which float about on the road like particularly fast tug boats), it's hard to get worked up by the sterile lines of a Nissan Skyline or Lotus Esprit.

AI is well-tuned and the cars' handling is challengingly twitchy at high speeds. If it wasn't for the camera angle making it tricky to read the lay of the track on occasion, and inconsistency so far as collisions are concerned (you

can shunt vans away like inflatables while slender roadside saplings will stop you dead) this would be a great, sometimes very good-looking, arcade racer with an eye on the *Ridge Racer V*/Burnout market. As it stands, it's good fun and well worth a, ahem, test drive. Knowing the fecundity of this franchise, a superior follow-up will be along soon, anyway. ■ Paul Fitzpatrick

TO OVERDRIVE

Why we'd buy it:
- We can't afford a real arcade cabinet

Why we'd leave it:
- Crap collision detection
- Those racing lines!

06

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

CART FURY CHAMPIONSHIP RACING

Coin-op king Midway gets back on track with yet another insanely fast arcade racer.

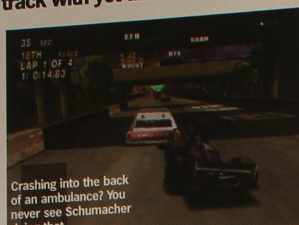


Simulation mode requires you to race through all the tracks without any nitro assistance.

Publisher: Midway Developer: Midway
Price: \$39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

You can almost hear the developers brainstorming at Midway: "Those cars look a bit plain – let's slap some flames blowing out the back of 'em!" "Great idea, Hank! But I think the handling is a bit too realistic so make them steer like jet-fuelled hot rods on rails!" *Hydro Thunder, Arctic Thunder, San Francisco Rush 2049* – all of them reflect Midway's idiosyncratic racing philosophy and for pure, unadulterated, arcade fun it's hard to fault them.

CART Fury has somewhat loftier aspirations, though. Realism rears its sober head in the form of official CART drivers, and genuine tracks such as Long Beach are included among the 17 circuits. You can also choose between four different driving levels, from Amateur to Expert (the latter even requires manual gear changing). In Arcade

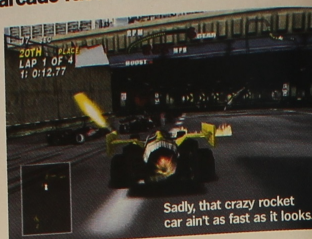


Crashing into the back of an ambulance? You never see Schumacher doing that.

mode there's little to differentiate these driving levels and no discernible contrast in the handling of the cars. As its name suggests, the Simulation mode does offer a bit more realism: allowing you to tweak tyres, nose height and suspension to suit your driving style and the specific track conditions. But the vehicles still retain their arcade feel, so it's basically just more of the same without the turbos.

Despite its no-doubt expensive licence, arcade action is what CART Fury is really about. Flying off the starting grid, it's a case of hitting the nitro, dodging the flying debris from spectacular crashes and keeping that pedal to the metal until you catch the leader. Sadly, the AI of the computer drivers is annoyingly unpredictable. You'll fly past them with ease only for the swines to come back seconds later, irrespective of whether you're driving like Mr Schumacher or Mr Magoo. Using the short-cuts keeps you ahead of the pack but the automatic catch-up is still infuriating.

While CART Fury holds true to Midway's usual formula of



Sadly, that crazy rocket car ain't as fast as it looks.

high-speed thrills, there is a little more to get your teeth into. Extras modes include a driving school, a season mode and a load of mini-games such as Last Man Standing and Destruction. There's also some entertaining two-player larks enabling you and a mate to partake in single races, a full season or battle it out in the mini-games. As a simulation this is a world away from the realism of Formula One games but it does provide an entertaining slice of arcade racing action. At least for a while. ■ **Adrian Lawton**

CART FURY CHAMPIONSHIP RACING

Why we'd buy it:
- Bang-on arcade thrills
- Loads of tracks and cars
- Ace two-player mode

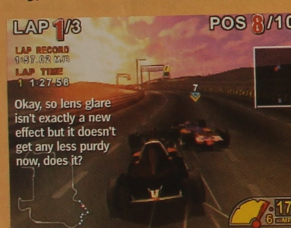
Why we'd leave it:
- Annoying opponent AI
- There are better racing games to choose from

06

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

DOWNFORCE

Hey, it's de-regulated Formula One racing on steroids. Want to take a spin?



Okay, so lens flare isn't exactly a new effect but it doesn't get any less purdy now, does it?

Publisher: Virgin Interactive Developer: Smartdog
Price: \$39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Downforce is as straightforward as racing games come. Befitting its arcade leanings, the cars are stylised monsters of kinetic aggression, each piloted by a comic book national stereotype in leathers, and the courses are tightly wound urban affairs created with speed and tactical braking in mind. It is, in most respects, just like any arcade racer you'd care to name. And while this isn't a bad thing, neither is it a recipe for memorable racing.

The game's premise is simple. With F1 losing its audience through boredom, a handful of drivers create a breakaway league with the aim of bringing a more exciting, de-regulated version of the sport to the yawning masses.

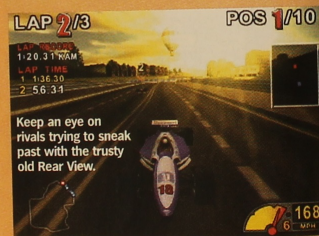


Tracks are full of deceptively tricky corners.

The resulting races are pared-down sprints to the finish line against nine opponents, without a pit stop or tuning session in sight. There are eight locations from Las Vegas to Sydney and each of these boasts a trio of increasingly taxing tracks.

How you get to know these tracks is up to you. You can check out their form in Free Ride mode or plough straight into the two main single-player options. Championship offers a linear route through the Beginner, Intermediate and Expert tracks, giving points for places and the cup to the driver with the most at the end of the season. Trophy mode is essentially a single race option and there are also Time Attack and Time Trial modes. Then there's the two-player modes which are good fun, but without AI drivers to flesh out circuits it all gets a bit monotonous after a while.

Downforce handles as any good arcade racer should. Steering is forgiving enough to be instantly enjoyable but



Keep an eye on rivals trying to sneak past with the trusty old Rear View.

with just the right amount of unpredictability to keep you on your toes. The graphics are fine when racing and spectacular when you crash. You'd never see mechanical damage like this in a licensed F1 game. All in all, Downforce is not unlike a summer blockbuster at the multiplex. It's well produced, fun while it lasts, but ultimately it fails to stir the soul. ■ **Paul Fitzpatrick**

DOWNFORCE

Why we'd buy it:
- We are virtual petrolheads
- We love the movie Crash
- We think regular F1 is dull

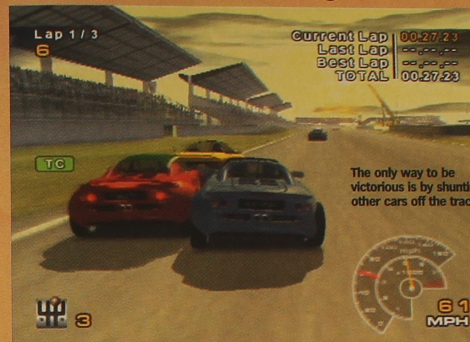
Why we'd leave it:
- We like breaking
- We want realism
- We already own Burnout

06

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

LOTUS CHALLENGE

Think Lotus. Think Esprit. Think Elise. Think speed, power, style, class, finesse. Think again...



The only way to be victorious is by shunting other cars off the track.

Publisher: Virgin Interactive Developer: Kuju Interactive Price: \$39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Whether you're the type to drool at the sight of fast shiny cars or not, you will know that the name Lotus is synonymous with pure class and raw pace. It's no surprise, then, that this symbol of motoring elegance is being represented in a game of its own. Virgin has scooped the licence for Lotus Challenge and with it the rights to reproduce all the company's dream machines. A sure-fire winner then? Or so you'd think.

Sadly, the game is a non-starter. In fact, it stinks more than a dodgy catalytic converter on a hot day. Why? Lotus Challenge is so painfully slow that it feels more like a Sunday driving sim than a high-octane thrill. The first championship throws you behind the wheel of a classic Lotus Seven S1 in the English countryside with a beautiful undulating track, but the pace is utterly pedestrian. Next stop London, and while the view of Buckingham Palace is impressive, who wants to trudge along so slowly they can see what colour mixer the Queen's slipping in her afternoon gin?

Even when you move on to the modern, faster cars the sense of speed doesn't improve. The handling is bizarre too, the cars turn like milk floats and you'll need to dab the handbrake to get around most corners. Worse still, the absence of a road map means you're totally unaware of your rivals' locations.

Stunt and Challenge modes have been chucked in to add variety. Some of the ideas are pretty good – drive a woman in labour to hospital or perform Hollywood stunts, for instance – but the handling is still poor, the crash physics are terrible and the race against time feels more like a turtle's morning jog. When you undertake the manoeuvres to test to unlock the stunt challenges you have to use manual gears. Reaching 70mph, spinning 180°, shifting down the gears and driving backwards without dropping below 60mph is both tricky and unrewarding. And if the manual gears prove awkward, the normal controls aren't much better. The automatic gear system works much more like that of bus climbing a steep hill, complete with that irritating whir of wasted power.

With the two-player mode proving equally uninspiring, it leaves the bonus events in which you undertake varied challenges as the only glimmers of fun here. But it's just not enough to rescue the game. Assuming the developers' hands were tied by Lotus (which is often the case when image-conscious car manufacturers dish out licences), gamers would be far better served with lookalike unofficial motors that handled well. If you want the real thing check out www.lotuscars.com. But if it's real gaming fun you're after buy Burnout instead. There's no challenge here. ■ **Lee Hall**

LOTUS CHALLENGE

Why we'd buy it:
- You're a Lotus fan
- There's a lot of variety
- A few fun challenges

Why we'd leave it:
- So slow it hurts
- Poor physics and handling

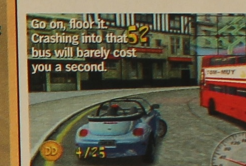
05

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

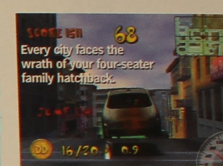
REVIEW



"Sorry mate, you can't park on my head."



Go on, footie! Crashing into that bus will barely cost you a second.



Every city faces the wrath of your four-wheeler family hatchback.

TG DARE DEVIL

Race around the streets of Rome, London, Tokyo and San Francisco... and collect coins!

Publisher: Kemco Developer: Papaya Studios Price: \$39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

When Gran Turismo burst onto the scene, revolutionising the racing genre with its incredible depth and RPG-esque progression system, virtually every other circuit racer was made to seem a bit, well, pointless in comparison. The happy outcome of this was a race to do something different with driving games. From the mission structure of *Driver* to the fare-collecting madness of *Crazy Taxi*, there has been a welcome broadening of horizons when it comes to getting behind the wheel and flooring the accelerator.

Continuing this trend is TG Dare Devil, where the objective is not to beat a bunch of cars to the finish line but to bomb around cities collecting coins. Sounds bizarre, but there is an explanation for it – kind of. As a member of the underground racing club, Dare Devil, you have to prove your mettle by picking up DD coins while motoring around like Stevie Wonder.

Driving with one eye on the road and one on the map displaying the coins, it's quite compelling stuff as you throw caution to the wind, crashing into any vehicle daft

enough to get in your way and smashing through shops and bus stops in search of those precious coins. To stand any chance of completing the missions, it's absolutely vital to pick up the nitro boosts and time bonuses scattered around. And, initially at least, you'll be on the edge of your seat as the clock counts down and there's just one final coin to find before time runs out.

However, by the fifth or sixth mission the game's flaws become all too evident. Objectives range from collecting 20 coins to collecting, erm, 25 coins and while this would make a decent bonus challenge, as the entire basis of the game there simply isn't enough variety to encourage extended play. To make matters worse, the actual gameplay is spoiled by shopping trolley handling and a frame rate that slows you to a mere crawl at some points.

TG Dare Devil deserves praise for attempting something different and it would be churlish to dislike such a fun premise. But when the fun begins to wane after an hour or two, it's impossible to justify parting with 40 notes for this game, let alone 40 DD coins. ■ **Lee Hart**

TG DARE DEVIL

Why we'd buy it:
- Simple and appealing
- Few big cities full of stuff to crash into

Why we'd leave it:
- Bad sense of security
- Dodgy handling
- Dodgy frame rate

05

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

SELECTION CRITERIA

How did we pick (and rank) the cars, bikes and futuristic jet craft featured in this top ten? Simple, we judged them on the following eight factors:

1. Top speed
2. Handling
3. Looks
4. Quality of the game in which the vehicle appears
5. Innovation
6. Credibility
7. Likelihood of burning a big hole in the ozone layer
8. Likelihood of attracting chicks

"Hi! I'm Jimmy Clarkson, the cheeky, pot-bellied, perm ponce from TV's *Fast Gear* programme. Join me now as I accelerate through a rip-roaring selection of my favourite PS2 motors. If these vehicles were any sexier, I'd be shagging them!"



WORDS: KEITH STUART/ILLUSTRATION: NICK DAVIES

TOP TEN PS2 VEHICLES

From the dirt tracks of Tatooine to the boiling Tarmac of Monaco we've scoured the universe for the hottest videogame motors. Strap yourself in tight, we're going from 0-10 sexy vehicles in eight pages!

Racing games. Once they were about as raunchy as Ann Widdecombe in hotpants. Blocky little sprites barely recognisable as vehicles, trundling slowly down long empty roads. But that was the past. PS2 and its grumbling monster of a graphics engine can spit out cars that look, sound and handle exactly like the real things. Artists now use over 13000 polys to construct a single model. Environment mapping means reflections of the roadside are beamed onto the chassis surface. And these days there's enough lens flare to give Marilyn Manson a suntan. Here are the very best examples of automotive pleasure, plucked from the cream of PS2's driving stock. If you're not aroused by now, buy a one way ticket to Bangkok and start cruising for middle-aged businessmen – you're a ladyboy!

10th

TOYOTA POD

GAME: GT CONCEPT: 2002 TOKYO-GENEVA

At first glance, this cute little runabout (unveiled at the 2001 Tokyo Motor Show) looks like a hi-tech public toilet. When I sat behind the steering wheel, I didn't know whether to hit the accelerator or pull my stone-washed jeans down and relax with a copy of *The Sun*. Luckily, I chose the former. Handling-wise this is no Porsche 911 – the Pod moves slower than a scenic cable car and corners like an OAP electric shopping buggy. But if you're after a cross between a hatchback and a Tamagotchi pet, this is the pup for you. The LED 'face' display on the front is capable of showing up to ten different emotions (brake too sharply and it gets cross, wash it or re-fuel and it beams like a sandboy), and the radio antenna on the back waggles to thank other drivers for giving way. Sometimes it even suggests corrections to your driving style based on expert data stored in its memory bank. However, if it did that to me I'd have to drive the bastard off a cliff.



SPECS

Engine: S-4 DOHC 16 valve, four cylinder
BHP: n/a
RPM: n/a
Top speed: 90mph (est)

9th

GAME: CRAZY TAXI

CADILLAC COUP DE VILLE CONVERTIBLE

The ultimate in American gas-guzzling opulence, this bright yellow beast drinks more than a Glasgow tramp, but looks a hell of a lot sexier thanks to its sleek Batmobile-styling and red leather interiors. Despite the brutish looks, the handling is so gentle and yielding you don't know whether you're driving a classic yankmobile or seducing a cheerleader. The tyre grip can be a challenge though. I've just taken this little lady through the park for a shortcut to KFC and she

wobbled like Dawn French's thighs in a wind tunnel. When I attempt a Limit Cut (Crazy Taxi parlance for a double speed boost) – weaaaarrrgh! – I immediately discover that the handling has more jiggle than J-L's divine arse. If you're looking for raw speed go for the Cadillac Eldorado, but if you're looking for a safe yet sexy introduction to Crazy motoring and aren't planning any offroad jaunts, the Coupe de Ville is one hot driving instructor. Mmm.



This car is the most exciting thing to come out of America since Beyonce.

SPECS

Engine: 7.7 litre V8 engine
BHP: 220-375
RPM: 4400
Top speed: 120mph (est)



PlayStation 2 SPECIAL EDITION: RACING GAMES

GAME: LE MANS 24 HOURS

8th

PORSCHE 911 GT2

Take an everyday sports coupé, inject it with enough adrenaline to literally excite a rhinoceros to death and you have the Porsche 911 GT2. The street version is thrilling enough, offering 0-62mph in 4.1 seconds via the ferocious 3.6 litre engine. But wait till you get your grubby fingers on the Le Mans machine. After salivating over the trademark Porsche styling – the chunky spoilers, the lasciviously low body – you'll notice two things: the engine Grrrrs like a hyperactive puppy and the handling's looser than a tart's morals. Take a corner too fast in this beast and you'll spin out like an ice skater pissed on turps. Respect it, and you'll glide through with the grace of a gymnast. 24 hours? 24 minutes will have most men reaching for the post-coital ciggies. ”



Look at these Porsches. They're dancing! Dancing like big metal dancing monkeys!



SPECS
Engine: 3600cc, Flat-six, twin turbo, inter-cooled
BHP: 650
RPM: 6-6500
Top speed: 200mph

GAME: MOTO GP 2

7th

SUZUKI RGV-R



Sitting bolt upright won't look so clever when you hit that bend at 231kph.

Rocketing under Donington's famous Dunlop bridge at 180mph is a liberating experience, but unless you want to be liberated from the bike itself, you'll need to respect Suzuki's classy Moto GP competitor. Corner too fast and the back wheel will start to slide like Eric Clapton's fingers across a fretboard, sending amateurs spinning off the Tarmac time and time again. Once mastered however, riders will find the RGV-r a smooth and receptive partner with super sharp braking and cool good looks. It may not be the fastest bike in Moto GP 2, but get it up to top speed and the engine is the loudest thing heard at Donington since Motorhead played the Monsters Of Rock festival. Okay, so Suzuki has recently upgraded to the brand new ultra-compact, ultra-efficient 990cc four stroke XREO engine, but for most the RGV-r will more than satisfy those urges to get something hot and powerful between your legs. And, let's face it, we all have those urges from time to time. ”



SPECS
Engine: V-4 500cc
Two-stroke engine
BHP: 180
Weight: 130kg
Top speed: 200mph+ (depending on gearing)



GAME: F1 2002

6th

FERRARI F2002



Handling is skittish and sensitive like a supermodel strung out on uppers.

SPECS
Engine: 3000 Ferrari (Type 051) V10
BHP: 800 (est)
RPM: 18000 (est)
Top speed: 220mph

“The Formula One season has been a predictable affair so far, with Michael Schumacher powering ahead of his rivals like Rommel cheerfully laying waste to the Egyptian front in his Panzer. Partly this is down to the driver himself: perhaps the most technically proficient F1 competitor in the modern era. But credit must also go to the new Ferrari car, with its improved aerodynamic efficiency, lower centre of gravity and revised 051 engine – a mechanical marvel so powerful and reliable it could quite conceivably jettison Lisa Riley into orbit if attached to a suitable space craft. I clamber in, jam the accelerator and discover that the driving model is exactly what you'd expect from an F1 car: arse-puckering acceleration, bowel-loosening top

speed and handling so sensitive, that if you told it how sensitive it was, it wouldn't speak to you for two weeks. Accelerating up Monza's extended Curve del Serraglio straight, the engine squeals like a stuck pig while lesser F1 cars gradually disappear in the wing mirrors. However, if you fail to slow down and take the mathematically precise racing line on a corner, you'll be off the track making friends with the crash barriers in a matter of seconds. But that, friends, is the cruel, exciting give and take adventure that is F1. She's a cruel mistress and the only way to experience her is in a sleek red car with a black pony on the badge – its mane as long and lustrous as David 'Shit, he's chipped me from 30 yards' Seaman's hair. ”



“It could quite conceivably jettison Lisa Riley into orbit if attached to a suitable space craft” //

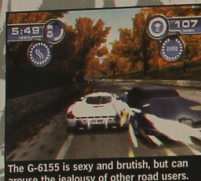
GAME: SPY HUNTER

5th G-6155 INTERCEPTOR 1983 CHEVROLET CAMARO Z28

With its guided missile launcher, 25mm cannon and 15mm machine guns spurring out 800 rounds a minute, the G-6155 Interceptor is more heavily armed than Iraq, and twice as dangerous. The original 1983 version of this CIA prototype was apparently modelled on the stocky Chevrolet Camaro Z28, but the latest PS2 rendition is so sleek and streamlined it's more like some kind of futuristic, turbo-charged martial art. The G-6155 has also got more tricks up its sleeves than a Labour spin doctor. Drive it into the drink and it'll transform into a speedboat, and if that takes too much damage you can escape on a jet ski – so much more impressive than the standard airbag feature. On top of all that, this sleek slymobile can do 0-60mph in 2.3 seconds. Makes James Bond's BMW Z3 about as desirable as a caramel brown Austin Allegro.

SPECS

Engine: Turbine
BHP: Classified
RPM: Classified
Top speed: Classified



The G-6155 is sexy and brutish, but can arouse the jealousy of other road users.

4th

GAME: STAR WARS: RACER REVENGE

ANAKIN'S POD

Apparently, young Skywalker salvaged the engines for this monster from junk yard owner Watto, who thought they were too knackered to ever use again. The Ignoramus. Jam-packed with custom components, this pod is really the jet craft equivalent of a modified Escort with Cossie parts. It handles as you'd expect – like sitting in an armchair then towing it

behind two exocet missiles. Cornering is surprisingly smooth, though, and you can rotate the thing ninety degrees to get through those narrow gaps in the traffic, or precarious Tatooine rock formations. Best of all, if travelling at a few hundred miles an hour just isn't enough, hit the booster button and you're going so fast you can almost overtake yourself!

SPECS

Engine: Two modified Radon-Ulzer 620C racing engines
Fuel system: Proprietary fuel atomiser
Top speed: 947kph



Pod racing: marginally more dangerous than cycling through London.

GAME: WIPEOUT FUSION

3rd PIRANHA SWIFTKILLER 4.2



It's named Piranha because it's fast and deadly. Not because it stars in B-movies.

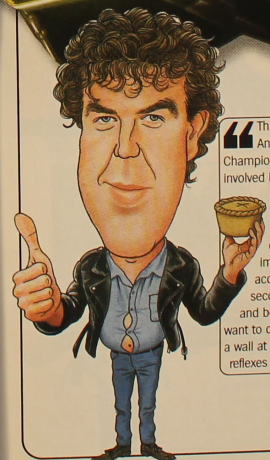
// "You rocket toward them and do masses of damage on impact – like a jet craft version of Roy Keane" //

SPECS

Engine Technology: QuadDrive using Overhead Thrust
Stabiliser: HFS-1 Push-Pull stabiliser
Braking System: G9 Air-Excluder with Retro-G Balancer
Weapons Control: Viper WC-001 by Viper Military Controls
Shield Control: Viper SC-003 with Quamere Factoriser by Viper
Top speed: 1114kph

This brand spanking new addition to the Anti-Gravity Racing Federation's F-9000 Championship is so dangerous, you could be involved in a terminal crash just by THINKING about dabbing the accelerator and pulling off from the starting line. Quite rightly, the Piranha is the last craft you open-up in Wipeout Fusion. It's impossibly, irresponsibly, stupidly fast. With acceleration measuring 0-250mph in 1.8 seconds, piloting it is like sitting on a bullet and being shot out of a Magnum 44. If you want to corner or overtake without slamming into a wall at twice the speed of light, you'll need the reflexes of a tenth dan kung fu master and the

courage of an adulterous stripper at a Taliban prayer meeting. And if you want to make it through the loops, swoops and multiple humps thrown out by courses like Alca Vexus, you'll also need the stomach of a curry-swilling navy. Weapon-wise, it comes with one of the best ever built into a hovering race craft. Despite sounding like some kind of deluxe dildo, The Penetrator actually turns your Piranha into a huge missile, so when you target an enemy and hit the button, you rocket toward them at hyperspace speeds and do masses of damage on impact – like a jet craft version of Roy Keane. This can also be used as a handy extra booster. If you feel that 1000kph isn't quite fast enough.



2nd

GAME: COLIN MCRAE RALLY 3

SUBARU IMPREZA WRC 2002

// "This is obviously a car that enjoys driving. It roars like some kind of Star Wars space monster" //



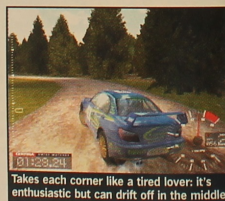
SPECS

Engine: 1994cc
Turbocharged Flat-4
cylinder engine
BHP: 300
RPM: 5500
Top speed: 185mph



“ Launched in 1992, the street version of this braying sports wagon is a favourite with boy racers from Essex to Encino, California, thanks to its sleek, masculine styling and sparkling gold alloys. The rally version is the big, snarling beast of the Impreza farmyard, though, and has had a fair degree of success in the World Rally Championship since its introduction in late 1993 – with Colin McRae’s 1995 Championship win and Richard Burns’ triumph in 2001 being the key achievements so far. I chose a UK circuit to test the Impreza WRC’s mettle and immediately started flinging it through the mud and gravel with all the violent abandon of a rugby hooker. The handling is deliciously

loose and rangy, encouraging you to approach every corner as though attacking it with an axe. Usually the vehicle copes well, thanks to its sturdy chassis and four wheel drive set-up, but take the piss and it’ll spin like a whirling dervish. Sound-wise, this is obviously a car that enjoys driving. It roars like some kind of Star Wars space monster, and while accelerating, you also get the scream of the turbo as it spurts hot speed into the engine’s beckoning chamber. While not quite as fast as the Ford Focus or Peugeot 206, the Impreza is reliable enough to get you in the top three every time. And it’s the best-looking rally car by far, a scowling Steve McQueen to the Focus’s bland Steve Davis. ”



Takes each corner like a tired lover: it's enthusiastic but can drift off in the middle.

1st

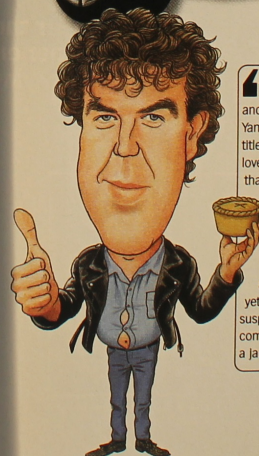
GAME: GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC

NISSAN SKYLINE GTR

// "The mighty 2568cc six-cylinder engine provides more power than the Millennium Falcon" //

SPECS

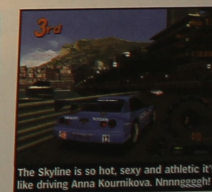
Engine: 2.6-litre, six
cylinder twin-turbo
with intercooler Flat-4
cylinder engine
BHP: 280
RPM: 6300
Top speed: 180mph



“ Nissan’s throbbing legend of a performance coupé is the ultimate Gran Turismo motor, and famously the car that GT creator Kazunori Yamauchi crashed while working on the original title. For that game, Polyphony began its Skyline love affair with the old 1989 GTR R32, the model that marked the rebirth of the GTR line, first introduced by Nissan back in 1969. For GT3, the team moved ahead a decade to tackle the seductive 1999 R34. In this latest model, the mighty 2568cc six-cylinder engine provides more power and acceleration than the Millennium Falcon, and yet the state-of-the-art four wheel drive and suspension systems give it the supernatural composure of a bomb disposal expert. Take it for a jaunt round the Deep Forest circuit and you’ll

see what I mean. From the start line you can hit 62mph in 5.2 seconds while the engine growls beneath you like a horny lion. On tight corners, the beautifully balanced R34 grips the road as though fastened by Velcro – or that marvellous tape Hollywood actresses use to bind their boobs into non-existent designer dresses.

Obviously, the GTR R34 is also gorgeous to behold. More aggressive than its predecessors, this is no coy little sports kitten. Its got a curvier front than Jordan, and its double flap spoiler and trademark recessed circular tail lights mean the Skyline rivals kylie for rear of the year. Indeed, any time you fancy a hot-blooded cruise through the sun-dappled forests of Trial Mountain, there’s really only one partner to go for. The big, purring sexpot that is the Skyline GTR. ”



The Skyline is so hot, sexy and athletic it's like driving Anna Kournikova. Now we get it!

OFFROAD RACERS

From the mud tracks of Europe to the deserts of North Africa, the offroad genre delivers thrilling, edge-of-the-seat racing by the truckload.

P 68 WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

SCEE's comprehensive, licensed rally sim captures all the thrills and spills of the real sport.

P 70 V-RALLY 3

The Infogrames rally series makes it to PS2 with an admirably hardcore, feature-packed update.

P 74 RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Heavily arcade-style contender with pacy cars, decent circuits but some dodgy realism oversights.

P 75 GLOBAL TOURING CHALLENGE

Go sight-seeing around Africa while trying to win races.

P 76 TEST DRIVE OFFROAD

The long-running Test Drive series goes, yes, offroad!

P 76 ATV OFFROAD

Quad-bike racing with fun, ramp-filled courses.

P 77 WILD RACING

Offroad buggy action with added stunts.

P 77 4X4 EVOLUTION

Hmm, do trucks really handle like moon buggies?

P 78 PRO RALLY 2002

Another decent wannabe to the rallying crown.

P 78 PARIS DAKAR RALLY

Based on the real-life trans-continental motoring event.

SUPER SPECIAL GREAT

Try out some of the much-loved special and super special stages in WRC's unusual split-screen mode.



A popular feature of the real-life World Rally Championship are the special stages and the purpose-built super special stages where two drivers race head-to-head, either on the same track or on dual-circuit tracks to get the best times. Ten stages are available for you to race against a mate in WRC's split-screen Multiplayer mode. These special stages are based in Monte Carlo, Argentina, Safari, Corsica and Italy, while the super specials are based on the actual famous circuits from Australia, Sweden, New Zealand, Portugal and the UK.

Intriguingly, you only get to view your opponent's vehicle as a ghost car with which you can't collide, a feature intended to allow you to view the track properly and concentrate on your own race. However, this does dilute the cut-and-thrust element of head-to-head racing and therefore the Multiplayer mode has to go down as a mild disappointment.



Current World Champ Richard Burns with co-driver Stephen 'Boyzone' Gately. (Not really).

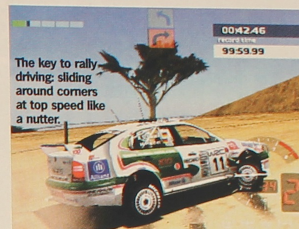
//For the soiling experience you should choose the terrifying new//



Tommi Makinen in the Mitsubishi Lancer Evo gets to grips with Monte Carlo's mountainous terrain.

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

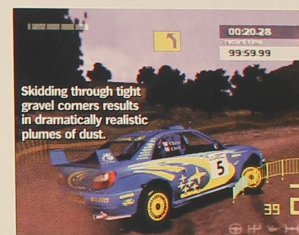
When it's only you, your co-driver and the dirt track, you'll need to muster every ounce of driving skill to punch in the best time.



The key to rally driving: sliding around corners at top speed like a nutter.



Different surfaces require a radically different approach.



Skidding through tight gravel corners results in dramatically realistic plumes of dust.

Publisher: SCEE Developer: Evolution Studios
Price: £19.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Rallying may not be racing in the traditional first-past-the-post sense, but it's infinitely more exciting than F1. Rally tracks are often roughly carved from the landscape, full of imperfections and potential blackspots waiting to snare the unprepared or the unlucky. Every course, being run on radically differing surfaces in radically differing climates, is a completely new experience.

World Rally Championship the game recreates this experience brilliantly. At the wheel, there can be no lapses in concentration. Even if a misjudged right-hand hairpin doesn't send you hurtling off a 50 foot cliff, you're going to lose vital seconds and a vital psychological advantage over your opponents. Yes, those CPU opponents do feel real, especially when Carlos Saliz - the bastard! - is always ten seconds ahead. Some of the longer stages in the game will actually leave you shattered upon completion. Corners where you can simply ease off the throttle and drift around are rare, and most require you to fight through gear changes as you attempt to brake, turn and accelerate away. Rallying is unforgiving, that's why it's so draining even in game form.

Having said that, WRC does make some concessions. Even if you launch off a precipice, you're returned to the track in three seconds without so much as a popped rib. Vehicle damage is probably the best ever seen in a videogame, with crumples, smashes and scrapes all visibly taking their toll on your dirtying motor, but however creaked it is, you can always limp to the finish line.

The cars steer and manoeuvre exceptionally - as long as you're prepared to brake for corners - but for the full pant-soiling experience you should choose the in-car view.

It all seems that much faster, your co-driver's instructions need to be heeded instantly and you'll often feel a little more in control of your drifts.

World Rally Championship is probably the best advert the sport has ever had. The full WRC licence is used appropriately, with all the displays matching the FIA's own, so what you see on screen closely resembles TV coverage. You can even use the pre-race promo video to learn from the way the pros attack a particular type of corner before applying their techniques in your own runs.

Input from the seven current rally car manufacturers (Ford, Subaru, Citroen, Mitsubishi, Peugeot, Hyundai and Skoda) has been invaluable. You will find, with persistence, that the Peugeot 206 is faster on Tarmac and the Subaru Impreza marginally more stable on gravel, while the Ford Focus (as driven by Colin McRae) is probably the best all-rounder. But whereas in GT3 the cars are the stars, here the courses are king. A quick spin around the opening stage at Monte Carlo immediately reveals the scope of Evolution's ambition. High on a mountain top, you can see the track stretching into the distance. This is no static background illusion - everything you can see exists in 3D. There are 14 rallies in the WRC and here each consists of five stages. When added to multiplayer stages this makes for around 80 unique stages stretching over 500km end-to-end - a colossal achievement.

Agreed, Evolution has been able to spend time on fashioning its many spectacular courses because it was unburdened by the need to develop AI for rival cars. WRC can't offer you the thrill of overtaking on the final bend, but you've got to pay your money and take your choice. Do you want the (often transparent) illusion of a head-to-head contest or the very real struggle between you and the track?

The variety of terrain to be conquered with the same car, requiring strength, speed, agility and versatility, makes rallying arguably the ultimate motorsport. World Rally Championship truly understands the essential dynamics of rallying, and what makes it a more exciting and involving discipline than F1 or any circuit-based racer for that matter. Finally, the PS2 has managed to deliver a realistic racing game with balls. ■ Sam Richards

WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Why we'd buy it:
- Righteously realistic
- 500km of varied terrain to race across

Why we'd leave it:
- It's not much use if you dislike rallying

09

PlayStation 2 NERDICT



Is it a bird? Is it a plane?
No it's a Peugeot 206
going like the clappers.

V-RALLY 3

Rally games are 'v' popular right now but does V-Rally 3 have enough true grit to give you the best time?



"You know, if there wasn't so much to do it'd be great to stop here for a spot of sightseeing. Oh, we're on fire."

Publisher: Infogrames Developer: Eden Studios Price: £44.99
Players: 1-4 (each player racing in turn) Out: Now

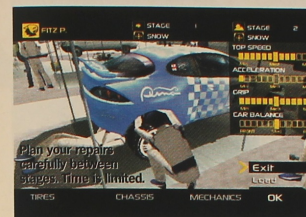
What do you look for when you're playing a game? Are you after a taxing challenge that ups the pleasure principle by making you sweat for victory, or is instantly accessible fun more to your taste? These are questions you may want to ask yourself before you get behind the wheel of Infogrames' V-Rally 3. The respected rally franchise has evolved in the wake of the superbly realistic World Rally Championship, dispensing with the populist Arcade mode – a feature of the earlier titles. In its place, there are fewer tracks with greater graphical detail and an exhaustive Career mode that will, on occasion, feel more 9-to-5 than 95mph. But as with all



Rule of thumb: try to keep all four wheels on the ground.



Choosing the right
setup on the snowy
stages is crucial.



Plan your repairs
carefully between
stages. Time limited.

WHO'S GONNA DRIVE YOU HOME?

Those all-important car choices in full.

1.6 LITRE FRONT WHEEL DRIVE CHAMPIONSHIP CARS



2.0 LITRE FOUR WHEEL DRIVE CHAMPIONSHIP CARS



Sadly, you can't
stop for a cup of
tea in this quaint
English village.

challenges, the harder the climb, the sweeter the view when you reach the summit, so maybe the real question should be, 'how badly do you want to win?'

On the surface, rallying seems a relatively impersonal form of competition – after all, you don't actually 'race' anyone. At least not in the neck-to-neck, jostling for position, overtaking on the last corner kind of way. But the fact of the matter is that rallying is about as personal a sport as you can get. Think about it. Without other competitors on the course to blame for spin-offs, prangs and life-threatening cut-ups, rally driving removes the sporting safety net of diminished responsibility in the face of failure. If you don't come first there's nobody to blame but yourself. To put it another way, rallying boils down to arguably the purest test of driving skill there is. No excuses.

With Codemasters yet to unleash Colin McRae 3.0, SCE's young buck, World Rally Championship currently reigns supreme on the PS2 rally scene. Part of its success comes down to the obvious coup of boasting the official

licence and all the attendant benefits this provides in terms of the real drivers, teams, stages and cars. And however good it is, V-Rally 3 cannot make the same claim.

START YOUR ENGINES

But if you were expecting that fact to take the air out of Infogrames' radials you'd be mistaken. Instead, the developers at Eden Studios have put their hearts and souls into forging a Career mode to be reckoned with – an absorbing, sometimes infuriating, journey from season to season and, with perseverance and skill, from manufacturer to manufacturer.

The Career (or V-Rally) mode starts in a deceptively sedate manner by letting you create a driver profile from a set of biographical details.

You can even give your man a look of his own with a selection of face/hair combinations. With this done, you're then presented with a contextualised career menu in the shape of an office desk complete with PC, Palm Pilot-style PDA and a pair of files. The first is a scrapbook of your finest moments and the other, a more scientific affair charting your progress (or otherwise) through the rallying ranks.

The season starts with you as a rookie. In order to race, you're going to have to get a contract, so it's off to the PC to check your emails for test drive offers. These come with useful gauges showing the team/manufacturers' current morale, funding, reliability and so on, and depending on who you try out for you'll have a varying number of chances to impress the suits in hospitality.

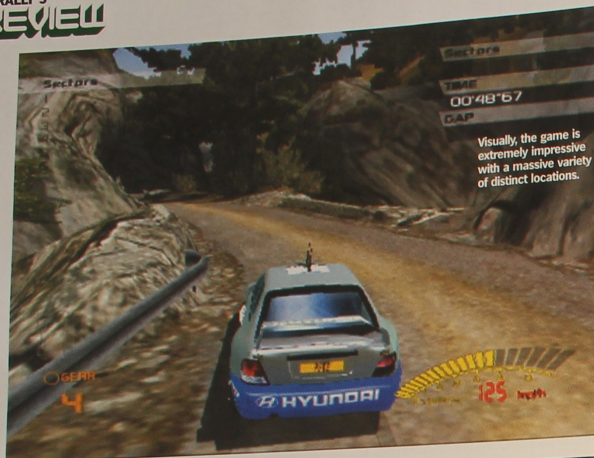
True to the game's hardcore approach to the sport, the test drive time trials are not just a mere formality, they serve as a fine statement of the developer's attention to detail. So much for the sedate beginning. Take the Citroën test drive for instance. The stage is a particularly narrow and serpentine course weaving through tiny French villages and edging impressive coastal vistas, and the time allowed to complete this tortuous run is far from generous.

Then you start driving. Now, nobody would claim that WRC handles like an arcade racer. Nevertheless, it is possible to keep your 'foot' on the accelerator throughout certain stages with only occasional taps of the brakes. Not with V-Rally 3. Fail to respect the laws of physics and you will crash. Again, and again. And given the way your car

//If negotiating a tight hairpin is tough, try doing it with a bent axle and knackered brakes//

accrues performance-debilitating damage, you really don't want to do that. If you think negotiating a breathtakingly tight hairpin at speed is tough, try doing it with a bent axle and knackered brakes. Yes, here's a racing game where the outward appearance of damage really affects the handling.

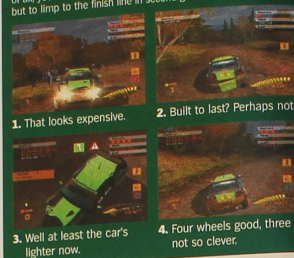
Getting used to V-Rally 3's exacting handling is a real challenge. But the flipside of this is that just winning a contract can make you feel like you've already driven a long, demanding season. The ensuing 1.6 Litre Front-Wheel Drive championship season hops from Finland to France then to Great Britain and finally to Sweden. There are five stages to each rally and points accumulate



BUMP AND GRIND

What's the damage? That depends on you.

One of the most remarkable features of V-Rally 3 is the way cars show damage not just externally, but also internally which can severely affect the handling. Smashing the headlights or losing the rear bumper won't be cause for much grief, but colliding badly with a bank one time too many and you could be in a world of trouble. Your steering might be damaged to the point where the car permanently veers to the left. Your brakes may also suffer. You could even lose a wheel. But worst of all, your transmission may break leaving you with no choice but to limp to the finish line in second gear...



1. That looks expensive.

2. Built to last? Perhaps not.

3. Well at least the car's lighter now.

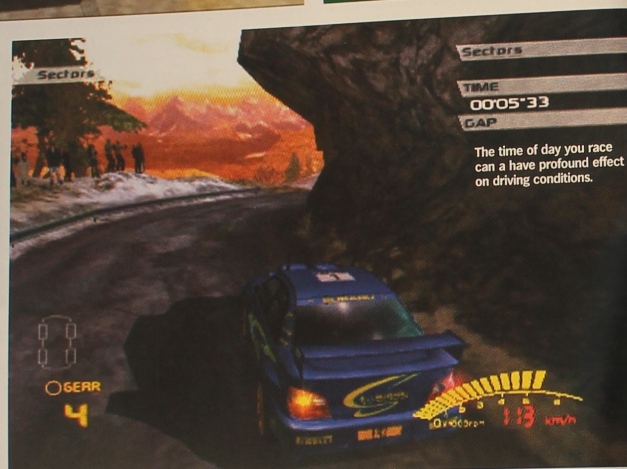
4. Four wheels good, three not so clever.



through the season to give you a final position on the table. Fail to hit a target position set by your management and your contract will be terminated. Make the grade and you'll not only be given the option to sign on for another season, but you'll also be courted by other teams on the prowl for talent. Keep improving your performance and there's a 2.0 Litre Four-Wheel Drive championship to reward your efforts, complete with new events in Germany and Kenya.

A GRIP ON THE COMPETITION

Competition is a surprisingly strategic affair. Before the opening stage of each rally you get to adjust various parameters on your car. And once more, V-Rally 3 tries to out-hardware the opposition. You can not only customise tyre type and pressure, but also everything from ride height, suspension stiffness and gear ratios to stabilizers, brake balance and differentials. Helpfully for 'tweak virgins', each option has a brief description of what you're on the verge of tampering with – if you want to, you can always settle with the perfectly adequate default settings. Impressive but hardly unexpected, right? The thing is, whichever setup you go for, it's going to be in place until after the second stage. In practice, by creating a combination of tyres, brakes and



other enhancements that's perfect for the opening section, you could end up coming unstuck if the weather has deteriorated or the racing surface is different come the second section. Not only this, but any damage you take during the initial run will be there throughout the next. So it not only pays to drive efficiently, with an eye on your car's mechanical health, but it's always a good idea to think one stage ahead when preparing to race.

As with the beautifully modelled car damage, the effect that course design has on gameplay is much more than cosmetic. Finland's undulating loose gravel feels totally different to driving on Sweden's packed snow and ice, while France's predominantly dry asphalt stages provide a very different driving challenge to Great Britain's mulchy autumn leaves and soft dirt. Elsewhere, graphical details add considerable atmosphere to events. Where applicable, dirt and snow accumulate very realistically on the cars' bodywork, and weather has been implemented with gleeful stubbornness. Fog and heavy rain can make even the most familiar stages feel like a fresh challenge, and when the sun glares off the snow in Sweden, it really makes you thankful for your navigator's corner-by-corner commentary.

Inevitably, V-Rally 3 is going to be compared to WRC. And given the inconsistent quality of the lion's share of PS2 rally titles, it's a compliment to Eden Studios that such a comparison can be invited at all. V-Rally 3 is a great game and a huge step forward for the series. If there's any criticism it's that the learning curve is initially unforgiving to the point of frustration. A fact which may dissuade the more casual of race fans looking for a quick rally fix. However, this is a game that rewards effort and perseverance with genuine satisfaction. Tinker with your car's settings, massage it around the bends with a mixture of precision and controlled insanity and you could find yourself in love, and on the winner's podium. Who needs the official licence, eh? ■ Paul Fitzpatrick

V-RALLY 3

Why we'd buy it:
- Great tracks, big challenge
- bit of gear differentials
turns us on

Why we'd leave it:
- No split-screen modes
- Brake pedal? What's a
brake pedal?



PlayStation 2 VERDICT

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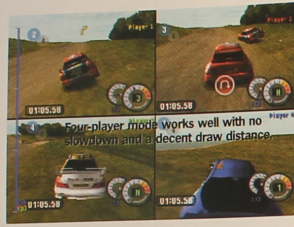
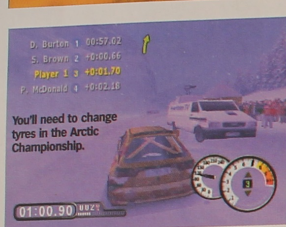
XGAMER

PlayStation
Magazine

EDGE



The usual variety of offroad terrains are here to test your driving mettle.



RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

The hotly-contested PS2 rally contest claims yet another mangled casualty.

Publisher: SCI Developer: Warthog Price: £39.99
Players: 1-4 Out: Now

With no less than eight rally games revving up for release this year – among them such handbrake-turning heavyweights as Colin McRae Rally 3 and World Rally Championship 2 – competition for your cash is incredibly fierce and SCI's offroad-em-up Rally Championship has got a battle on its hands to compete with the big boys.

Featuring 29 officially licensed cars, 24 varied stages and a smattering of real-life drivers, Rally Championship's impressive credentials put it up there alongside its peers. But it's the game's carefree arcade nature that – while initially enjoyable – eventually costs it big time in the quality stakes. After taking the wheel for the first time and ripping through a few of the well-structured courses, our thoughts turned to the possibility of a photo finish to separate this offering from the big boys – but then after prolonged play it blew a gasket, span uncontrollably off the track and was thus found out as being the rallying also-ran that it really is. Although never boasting of any great realism, we have

// After prolonged play it blew a gasket and was found out as being a mere rallying also-ran //

there? Admittedly, some of these aspects may well have been overlooked had we not been extra vigilant in our aim to determine the best rally game out there. But once you do notice the flaws, they soon begin to detract from what is otherwise a fairly impressive racer.

It looks the part with a vast draw distance, well-textured surfaces and lots of subtle mud-splattering effects. Your car also suffers noticeable damage when you hit a hazard and lose control on an embankment to send it rolling down into a neighbouring field. However, despite

CRASH TEST DUMMIES

The publisher boasts of sophisticated car damage but the game for six hours solid, we have to say we didn't notice it. So we bought a flashy new Vauxhall Astra and went about seeing just how much punishment the car could take. Turns out the bloody thing's indestructible!



Test 1. Plough full pelt into bunting
Bracing ourselves for severe whiplash and early retirement from the race, we rammed into a string of trackside flags. It doesn't sound too testing for the average car, we know, but these flags are rock solid.
Result: Damaged headlights



Test 2. Roll into a field
Ripping through the Scottish highlands, our ill-advised refusal to slow down along a ridge resulted in our car plummeting into a field below. Apart from losing five seconds of time the resulting prang was uneventful to say the least.
Result: Slightly dented door



Test 3. Drive into a ravine
Tearing along African dirt tracks, our co-driver's half-hearted warning that a "hazard" was approaching wasn't met with the sensible braking action it was more a case of 'slam down the accelerator and veer into the ravine in question'.
Result: Damaged exhaust

being warned of vital components being damaged in such accidents, the performance of your car never seems to deteriorate. Likewise, despite having a packed forecourt of cars to choose from (you must win races and buy them), they all handle too similarly to warrant much experimentation. The only real improvement with each hike in category is the speed, and although you can tweak the suspension, steering and brake response, you won't even need to change your tyres until you're on the final track of the first championship – a good hour and a half into the game.

Rally Championship is a passable introduction to the genre and novices would undoubtedly benefit from the ease of use and crisp handling. But what with the throaty purr of McRae's Focus echoing over the hills, serious drivers would be best advised to wait a little longer for the undisputed king to reclaim his crown. ■ **Ryan Butt**

RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

Why we'd buy it:
- Fun, suitably slippery arcade handling
- Varied courses and cars

Why we'd leave it:
- Not very realistic
- Hampered by dull gameplay flaws

06

PlayStation 2 **VERDICT**



Races are always tight thanks to the ultra-competitive computer opposition.

CPU cars tend to follow a bit of a predictable pattern.

GLOBAL TOURING CHALLENGE: AFRICA

Slam your pedal to the metal for the toughest African challenge since Zulu. But without people chucking spears and that.



No time for tourism here, just keep your foot on the pedal.

Publisher: Rage Developer: Rage Price: £39.99
Players: 1-2 Out: Now

If we were to believe the majority of racing games that feature Africa as one of their stages (often referred to simply as 'the Safari level') you would be forgiven for thinking the continent is nothing but an arid, featureless dustbowl. Aside from the odd passing zebra of course. Respect due to GTC: Africa, then – a touring car title that not only shows off the picturesque scenery of the country but puts it to good use within some well realised courses.

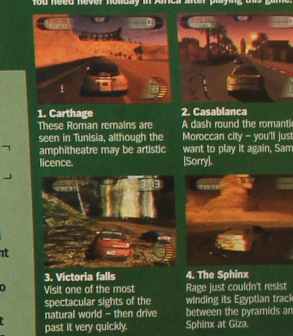
Offering a 19-circuit trip from point to point across Africa, and taking in levels based in Zambia, Egypt, South Africa and Morocco, GTC shows us the continent's landmarks as sleek Ford Focuses and Mégane Coupés enjoy a journey that dispels many a gaming myth. And when necessity does take the cars into barren areas, it's only to show that the courses are not just flat, straight desert roads, but that they boast gentle hills and tight corners every bit as tortuous as those found in urban locales.

But while GTC: Africa avoids visual stereotypes, it does feature some overly-familiar gameplay. Although the sublime handling offered by the analogue sticks allows you to throw the cars around in a suitably robust manner, the game follows a predictable route. Everything boils down to speed, negating the essence of real touring car tournaments where getting through in one piece is paramount. This is further emphasised by the short course lengths and a lack of visible damage to the vehicles. Despite the cars repeatedly side-slamming each other and bouncing off walls, they remain showroom clean throughout, further distancing GTC from the sport it claims to mimic – yet again the demands of car manufacturers have diluted the essence of a touring car contest.

However, as a straight – if predictable – racing game,

CHALLENGING TIME

You need never holiday in Africa after playing this game.



1. Carthage
These Roman remains are seen in Tunisia, although the amphitheatre may be artistic licence.

2. Casablanca
A dash round the romantic Moroccan city – you'll just want to play it again, Sam. [Sorry.]

3. Victoria falls
Visit one of the most spectacular sights of the natural world – then drive past it very quickly.

4. The Sphinx
Rage just couldn't resist winding its Egyptian track between the pyramids and Sphinx at Giza.

// The sublime handling allows you to throw the cars around in a suitably robust manner //

there is nevertheless something very appealing about GTC. This is best demonstrated as clouds of dust obscure your vision as you pelt around a tight corner. At times it feels like Ridge Racer V in undesirable conditions, but with a supremely fast pace adding the kind of buzz Namco's game lacks. In the meantime, graphical tricks such as the sunlight glancing off the cars' bodywork also deflect attention from what is effectively just a no-frills driving title. Overall, it's hard to dislike a game that provides exciting racing around such lush and diverse circuits as those found in GTC: Africa, no matter how little it advances the genre. ■ **Steve Merrett**

GLOBAL TOURING CHALLENGE: AFRICA

Why we'd buy it:
- A fast, underwhelming racer
- Fun two-player
- Cars handle well

Why we'd leave it:
- Not really original
- No car damage
- Courses are too short

07

PlayStation 2 **VERDICT**

TEST DRIVE: OFFROAD WIDE OPEN

From the developer of *Smuggler's Run* comes another jeep racing, free-roaming, all-terrainer.

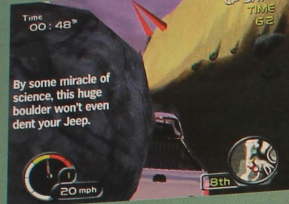


Big jumps like this are a great opportunity to gain a few places in the order.

Publisher: Infogrames Developer: Angel Studios
Price: \$39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Quite why anyone would want to make a hobby out of offroad driving is a mystery. Not only is there the constant threat of your vehicle tumbling onto its roof, or skidding into a bear, it's a filthy way to pass the time. Just you ask any offroader, but that mud has a habit of working its way through the smallest crevice. Of course, the way to avoid this threat of injury and dirtiness is to play an offroad racing videogame... Like this one!

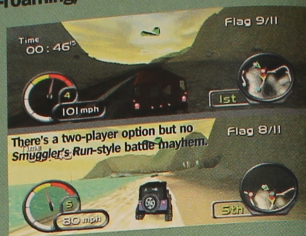
Developed by Angel Studios, the team behind the free-roaming *Smuggler's Run*, there's a small amount of Test Drive: Offroad. It's the stench of familiarity. But nice familiarity, like a kindly uncle coming into your bedroom to say goodnight in his special way.



By some miracle of science, this huge boulder won't even dent your Jeep.

Here's how it is taking control of some 16 licensed vehicles, Test Drive: Offroad thrusts you into 30-odd go-anywhere races, where the aim is to reach the next checkpoint, no matter what. Though you get a Free Drive option, the main single-player game is more tightly structured than *Smuggler's Run*. It divides the races into two types: those where the checkpoints are dotted randomly around the landscape, and those where you benefit from following a more linear course.

Though they're broken down into the aforementioned races, there are only three main maps in the game: Hawaii, Yosemite National Park, and Moab, Utah. Suffice to say, each is huge, and packed with features such as rockslides, volcanoes, oncoming traffic and waves crashing against rocks. But large as these maps may be, there are only three of them, and by the time you've completed every race you'll possibly be sick of seeing the same old hills, valleys, short cuts, troughs and scrubby brush.



There's a two-player option but no *Smuggler's Run*-style battle mayhem.

Also, though it purports to have 'realistic physics' the realism doesn't extend to damage. Admittedly, the way the vehicles shrug off such impacts is part of Test Drive's fun, but anyone expecting a simulation will be disappointed. Ultimately, Test Drive: Offroad is a relatively good offroad racer. It feels a bit like *Smuggler's Run* but benefits from refinements to the gameplay, and the sheer size and quality of the courses and their landscapes makes up for the paltry three locations. ■ Paul Rose

TD: OFFROAD WIDE OPEN

Why we'd buy it:
- Spectacular views
- Entertaining go-anywhere racing

Why we'd leave it:
- Limited to three areas
- The graphics are pretty but plain

06

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

ATV OFFROAD

When quad bike racing meets anti-gravity stunt flying just about anything can happen!

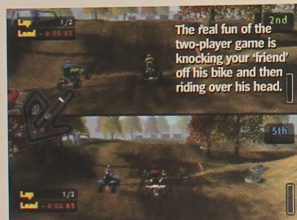


Actually touching the ground is a rare treat...

Publisher: SCE Developer: Rainbow Studios
Price: \$39.99 Players: 1-4 Out: Now

This is no racing 'simulation'. If our planet's gravity worked like this we'd all be forced to wear moonboots lest we float into the ozone like stray balloons. But it doesn't matter. *ATV Offroad* is just a game and its slightly thinned gravity (plus the fact that you can alter your bike's direction mid-flight) is there to make it more playable. Fair enough.

So what you get is a series of courses made up of big hills, small hills, sharp bends and horrifying drops. Every time you hit a decent-sized ramp, you're off, soaring through the air like Elliot in *ET*. This brings a whole new tactical dimension to the racing game. When approaching a series of small hills, for example, simply flooring the accelerator

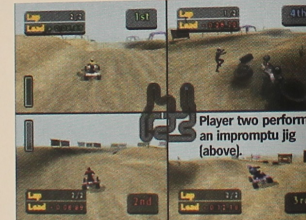


The real fun of the two-player game is knocking your friend off his bike and then riding over his head.

and yelling 'Geronimo!' isn't good enough. You need to build up the correct rhythm, hitting each ripple at exactly the right point to ensure a smooth ride. You'll also need to use the analogue stick carefully, pushing up to add height to your jump and pulling sharply down in order to level out.

On paper this sounds great. In reality it's a different story. Due to the deadly combination of mid-race accidents and an overly-generous catch-up system, it really doesn't matter what you do for most of the race as long as you get it together in the final straight.

The visuals aren't quite there either. Although *ATV* features a decent range of environments, from leafy forests to alpine ski resorts and scorching deserts, the colours are drab and washed out and the background scenery is sparse and desolate. This is almost made up for by the engine noises which are fabulously funny. When you're way ahead



Player two perform an impromptu jig (above).

of the pack your bike noise resembles a long raspberry being blown through a megaphone.

Nor far beneath the muddy surface of *ATV Offroad* is a great game trying to emerge. Sadly, the lack of a challenging single-player mode and the mediocre visuals suggest that more time was needed on the project before it hurtled onto PS2. ■ Keith Stuart

ATV OFFROAD

Why we'd buy it:
- The circuits are good fun
- The physics engine is interesting

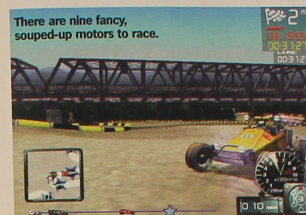
Why we'd leave it:
- The single-player game mode is limited
- Opponent AI is flawed

06

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

WILD WILD RACING

Want to feel the wind in your hair? Hmm, how about mud, snow, rain and gravel instead?



There are nine fancy, souped-up motors to race.

Publisher: Rage Developer: Rage
Price: \$44.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Life can be hard. Oh, sometimes it's a breeze: the sun is shining, you've got a beautiful laydee on your arm... But getting the good things in life can be a right effort and one rarely matched by the reward. *Wild Wild Racing* can be like that. As you negotiate its twisting offroad tracks in your mud-caked power buggy, you'll often wonder if the odds aren't stacked against you. It would be an understandable reaction, but an unfair one. Persevere, you see, and you'll be rewarded by some very enjoyable racing.

Stripped of storyline or fancy dressing, *WWR* saves its depth for the most committed players. Hints of this first become clear when you see the complex web of interconnected game modes it offers. The ultimate aim is to claim victory in them all but it's impossible to get far in one

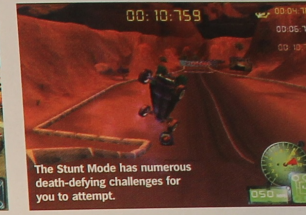


The sensitive handling takes a fair bit of getting used to.

without dipping into the others. Sure, some tracks are unlocked in the Championship mode, but you won't be able to access later ones without upgrades which are won in Time Attack, or new cars which are obtained in the Challenge mode that could be a full game in its own right.

WWR has five tracks in total and while that may not sound like much, what they lack in number they make up for in complexity and length. Each course is an undulating epic with unpredictable surfaces and – depending on the country – very inclement weather. As you progress through the game a number of hitherto blocked sub-routes are opened on each course. Some of these sneaky short cuts are easy, others hard, but all alter the dynamics of the race, and with up to nine per track, variety won't be a problem.

Keeping on them, however, could be. The nine cars, from the no-frills Typhoon to the very desirable Wild Wolf, react to every bump and surface change with a realism that can at times border on the joyless. On *WWR*'s more winding



The Stunt Mode has numerous death-defying challenges for you to attempt.

Inclines (especially in mapless two-player mode, where pop-up will insist on rearing its foggy head, reading the track at anything above race-losing pace can be diabolical.

For those with skill and dedication enough to get to grips with its handling, cars and tracks, *Wild Wild Racing* is a decent purchase that will reward your time with a satisfying challenge. But the fact remains that for offroad action, there are more instantly accessible and far more enjoyable games available. ■ Paul Fitzpatrick

WILD WILD RACING

Why we'd buy it:
- Incredible Challenge mode
- Massive, well-designed courses

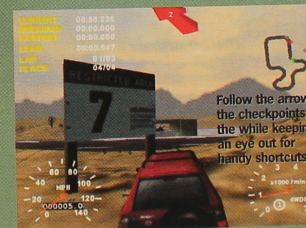
Why we'd leave it:
- Perspective and handling can be disconcerting
- Pop-up in two-player

06

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

4X4 EVOLUTION

With an all-terrain truck, a flask of hot tea and a tired *Fast Show* reference at the ready, 'Let's offroad!'

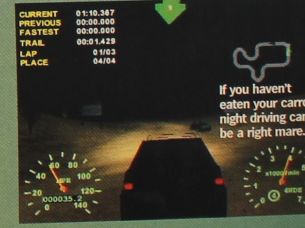


Follow the arrow to the checkpoints (all the while keeping an eye out for handy shortcuts).

Publisher: Take 2 Developer: Terminal Reality
Price: \$39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

In real life those hulking great offroad motors need nerves of steel and arms like Tyson to wrestle under control. Thankfully, in *4x4 Evolution* realism has taken a back seat to playability, otherwise your videogame vehicle would spend most of the time on its roof. Behind the wheel of any one of the game's range of cars you can get away with some death – and gravity – defying feats. But, due to a faulty physics engine, it actually feels more like you're controlling a moon buggy than tons of polished steel.

To excel at the game's off-road racing you'll need to cut as many corners as possible while ensuring each checkpoint is reached. An on-screen arrow directs you to

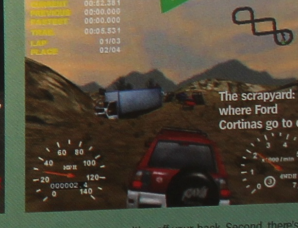


If you haven't eaten your carrots, night driving can be a right mare.

each point, which are best passed by taking short cuts. These vary from nipping across a railway bridge, climbing a huge hill or jumping a hidden ramp to shave seconds off your time.

The overall arcade feel is belied by the sheer weight of options on offer. The full-on Championship mode tempts you with cash prizes to improve your car with everything from the aesthetically pleasing but pointless spoilers, to turbochargers and coolant systems all of which have but the tiniest bearing on your car's performance. Working your way through the leagues is painfully slow at first. But scripp together enough dough for the right parts and you'll slowly find yourself coming in first and second instead of last. The game's hook is there – it's just well hidden.

However, the wealth of options can't disguise flaws in the gameplay. First, there's no rear-view mirror – essential



The scrapyard: where Ford Cortinas go to die.

for keeping the opposition off your back. Second, there's no option to practise tracks before a race – giving the already tricky computer opponents a frustrating advantage. Messing about in the mud, dodging oncoming traffic and leaping giant chasms should be terrific fun. Unfortunately *4x4 Evolution* takes itself so seriously that the end result is just disappointingly dull. ■ Rick Moulton

4X4 EVOLUTION

Why we'd buy it:
- Smooth handling

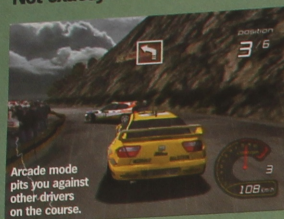
Why we'd leave it:
- Looks impressive
- Influences too often

05

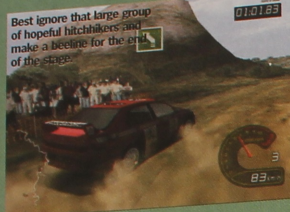
PlayStation 2 NERDICT

PRO RALLY 2002

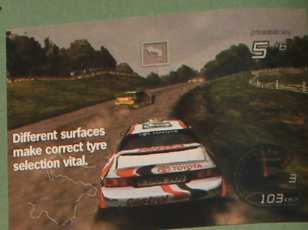
Not exactly road rage, more track tedium in Ubi Soft's latest offroader...



Arcade mode pits you against other drivers on the course.



Best ignore that large group of hopeful hitchhikers and make a beeline for the end of the stage.



Different surfaces make correct tyre selection vital.

Publisher: Ubi Soft Developer: Ubi Soft
Price: £19.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Remember when there were no rally games on the market? When F1 titles and the glam of GT-style racing sims were out on top while their mud-curling cousins were yet to start their engines? Since Colin McRae Rally popularised the genre four years ago, there have been at least three major rally titles sitting on the shelves every year and on PS2 we can barely move for 'em. *Pro Rally 2002* is the latest addition to the many franchises out there but, given the level of competition, a new rally game has to be a bit special to stand out from the crowd.

Good handling mechanics are always important in communicating the feel of tyre traction across differing road surfaces, but *Pro Rally 2002* makes elementary mistakes. Grip is conveyed in a very basic manner: hit mud and the

car slides out for a split-second longer than if the vehicle was on tarmac, travel across ice and the back slips out a little more than it would on a wet surface. That's about it. There's no real sense of connection between the car and the road surface, there's no rumble feedback and the nuance of control evident in titles like *V-Rally 3* and *World Rally Championship* just isn't there.

On beginning the game, you must take part in and complete a Driving School before you can even enter the Championship mode. It copies the excellent licence tests of the *Gran Turismo* series but does so with less expertise. In fact, the lessons are so poorly-designed and arbitrary that they teach the driver very little. It would've been much more helpful to just let the player learn how to control the vehicle by joining the Championship straight away.

In its defence, *Pro Rally 2002* is technically competent. There are no frame rate issues, the graphics are solid (if a little bland) and all the options you'd expect in a rally game

are present. Weather effects are convincing, tyres can be changed to suit the road surface and damage can be repaired between stages. But these are the options that come as standard in any half-decent rally driving title. There's even a decent Arcade mode to appease those who prefer the challenge of other competitors on the road. Purchase *Pro Rally 2002* and there is a chance that you will enjoy testing out the courses and options, but be warned: this game is averageware personified. ■ Mark Walbank

PRO RALLY 2002

Why we'd buy it:
- A competent offroader
- If you're collecting every rally game in existence

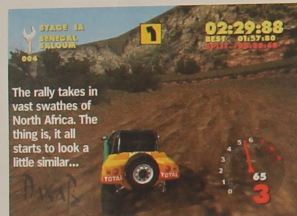
Why we'd leave it:
- Doesn't generate passion or tension
- Very basic handling



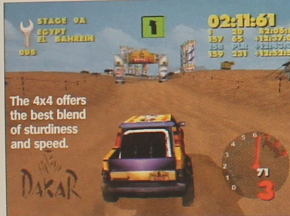
PlayStation 2 VERDICT

PARIS-DAKAR RALLY

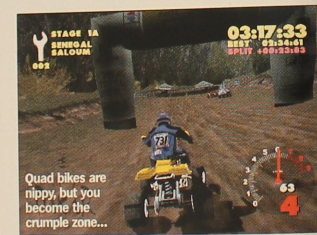
Africa. Cradle of humanity and the location for the most gruelling rally race in the world.



The rally takes in vast swathes of North Africa. The thing is, it all starts to look a little similar...



The 4x4 offers the best blend of sturdiness and speed.



Quad bikes are nippy, but you become the crumple zone...

Publisher: Acclaim Developer: Broadword
Price: £39.99 Players: 1 Out: Now

For those who don't know the Paris-Dakar Rally from a nibbles run to the local garage, the 22-year-old race is the ultimate offroad experience for thrill seekers with spare time and a death wish. The gargantuan rally spans North Africa, serving up competitors with a gruelling 11,000km of inhospitable terrain in buggies, 4x4s, quad bikes and motorbikes.

The game's three modes, Time Attack, Single Race and Challenge hinge around the gargantuan rally's numerous and on paper at least diverse stages. Sadly though, the quality of the driving experience fails to keep pace with the sheer mileage on offer. The result is essentially a single mode game that looks more varied than it actually is.

Senegal has its dried river beds, Libya its parched dunes and Niger its creeks and volcanic slopes. It sounds great but in practice the feel of each environment is depressingly similar. Furthermore, the gift of recreating a race famous for pitting four different vehicle classes against one another is squandered with handling that only differs in the ease with which it's possible to crash your vehicle. Even a choice of vehicle settings fails to bring any variety to the handling.

What's more, the freedom that offroad racing usually affords gamers is joylessly nubbled. Wander a few metres from the designated track and your rough, tough, go anywhere vehicle will slow to an infuriating limp. It's a big country, of course, and a race so totally free roaming wouldn't be workable but it's lazy to suggest that a specially engineered 4x4 SUV can't cope with a featureless hillock. Given a less ambitious source land they don't come

much more ambitious than the Paris-Dakar Rally the result could have been a richer and altogether more focused experience. There are moments here when you get a real sense of the struggle to better the unforgiving environment that must be at the heart of the real event, but only rarely. Most of the time it feels like you're running through sand. ■ Paul Fitzpatrick

PARIS-DAKAR RALLY

Why we'd buy it:
- With offroad competitors
- We prefer marathons to sprints

Why we'd leave it:
- Looks don't do the African continent justice
- Overly-similar handling



PlayStation 2 VERDICT

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ON SALE 9 AUGUST

The racing games that prefer *Blade Runner*-esque locales, laser cannons, guided missiles and thumping dance music to dull stuff like 'realistic handling'.

P 80 WIPEOUT FUSION

The godfather of futuristic racing gets its long-awaited PS2 premiere, with eye-watering results.

P 82 EXTREME G-3

Acclaim's jet bike take on WipeOut with roller coaster courses and incredible speeds.

P 83 STAR WARS: RACERS REVENGE

The updated Ben Hur chariot scene from *The Phantom Menace* comes to PS2 in this turbo-charged pod racer.

P 84 G-SURFERS

It's a poor man's WipeOut but with a superb 'build your own circuit' option!

P 84 NY RACE

Mediocre sky race spin-off inspired by the only decent bit in *The Fifth Element*.

THE ZONES

Ride hard, live free. But mind that dangerous bend on Temtesh Bay.



FLORION HEIGHT
USA
Sidestep shield-crushing boulders and squint through visibility-impaired sandstorms.



MANDRASHEE
China
Takes in volcanoes, cliffs, beaches and a stunning underwater section.



CUBISS FLOAT
Switzerland
One of Future-Earth's remaining 'ice-zones'. With a near-blinding dash through a murky cavern.



ALCA VEXUS
Mexico
Jungle level with horrific scenery obstacles which can lead to position-guzzling sudden stops.



WOHL SQUARE
Russia
Gassy and polluted industrial theme. Lots of steaming generators and pumping pistons.



TEMTESH BAY
Australia
A curvy crawl uphill followed by some insanely fast dips, banks and loops. Tricky pit stop too.



KATMODA 12
The Moon
Features a stomach-spinning Alton Towers Oblivion-like vertical drop – with a loop.



DEVILIA
Planet Novon
Uh-uh, we're not telling. Let's just say this doesn't look like any course you've ever seen...



WipeOut blasts onto PS2 and its tracks and sheer velocity are more AAAARRRGH-inducing than ever before.



In 13th position and still being overtaken? Don't despair – with practice you'll soon be moving up the leaderboard.



You'll need to use the trusty old air brakes on the more twisty sections.

WIPEOUT FUSION

The king of sci-fi racing is back, boasting more rocket fuel than a tramp's urine sample.

Publisher: SCEE Developer: Studio Liverpool
Price: £34.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

With racing games, 'feel' is everything. If, say, the GT3 cars had just the slightest hint of clunky, unrealistic handling, then all its depth and gloss would count for nothing. The spell would be broken and it'd feel like just another driving game. The WipeOut designers have always been smart enough to blend all of their elements (visuals, sound, speed, power-ups) to create a perfect all-round feel. Here, they've used the PS2's graphical finesse and brute power to produce an incredibly challenging game that looks fantastic, sounds great, moves like a flash and plays like a dream. It's also more flexible, more customisable and far more guarded about its secrets.

The first shock is that, where previous WipeOuts have kept only the toughest courses and slinkier ships locked up, here you start with the barest bones of ships, tracks and weapons. The entire design of the single-player game is geared towards unlocking everything through meeting the challenges and picking up bronze, silver and gold medals. When you finally do make the top three, the satisfaction in seeing that first new weapon reveal itself is enormous.

Racing is as sleek, smooth and zippy as ever. Crucially, the handling has been tweaked to make control even more about creative steering, anticipation and instinct than in the PSone versions. Getting to know the racing-line is only half the battle. Success is about sharp management of many factors: too much emphasis on speed and you'll be bounced around by the walls and the other cars, leaving your shield drained; too much caution and you'll be left far behind to enjoy that nice, spotless ship – unless you work on those weapon skills.

Of course, the ships don't just effortlessly skip into right-angle turns when you need to avoid a poorly judged corner, and the moans about wall-scraping will never go away. But that's all part of the game – particularly on the

busier, less forgiving tracks. You have to gain enough familiarity with the layout and get busy on the air-brakes to minimise collision damage, while keeping diligent about shield-recharging. Whatever mode you're in, the game is based around eight global zones which each feature six tracks (three different courses plus their reversals). Early zones like the US-based Florion Height are straightforward designs where the challenge comes from the odd set-piece. But as the features open up, track complexity increases, incorporating short (and long) cuts, extreme

disabled. At the off, your score starts to steadily tick upwards as a ten-second timer counts down. When the timer hits zero, it resets and you go up from 'zone' one to two – that is, your ship's top speed increases (braking is limited and there's no shield recharge). So, the longer you survive, the more zones you go through, the faster you get, the higher score you get. But, obviously, as you get faster it becomes more difficult to avoid those wall-scrapes, and that shield energy soon starts to trickle away. Game over when your craft explodes. You're then given a code which,

when entered into the official Web site (www.wipeoutfusion.com), will translate into score, zone level reached, etc. It's a superb way of uniting all the international PS2

//If you're already a WipeOut fan this is everything you've hoped for and much, much more//

scenery distractions (snowstorms, rock outcrops, big trees in the road, loops and leaps and special trigger pads that bridge gaps, raise ramps and even open up doorways to hidden super short cuts.

IN THE ZONES

The basic quick-start is Arcade mode: just pick a team and a second pilot and race the first course in any of the three zones. Finish in the top three and a new course will unlock, along with the occasional new weapon/pick-up. League mode works in a more long-term way. You pick your team and pilot and enter a competition over three set courses. Finishing high on the leaderboard is rewarded with credits which can be spent on boosting your craft's potential (thrust, brake-force, shield power, etc.). Multiplayer mode is the standard split-screen affair, but it's been considerably pepped up over the PSone's WipeOut. Now, practically everything is customisable – weapon types, number of laps, vertical/horizontal split, shield handicaps... The list goes on.

The real stroke of genius is Zone mode. You start with a standard ship on any unlocked level. Weapon pads are

territories into one huge international competition. Pretty much everything has been ramped up to make the previous versions seem slightly pedestrian by comparison. The few problems (dodgy Autopilot, weedy Flame-thrower, a teensy bit of slowdown on the really complex bits) are nigglings which are easily offset by the game's many pleasures. If you're already a WipeOut fan this is everything you've hoped for and much, much more. If you're a newcomer or a doubter take the time and effort to tune in and you'll soon be converted. It's an instant classic – brilliantly devised and designed, and straight onto the A-list of must-own PS2 titles. ■ **Andy Lowe**

WIPEOUT FUSION

Why we'd buy it:
- Lowest of the class team
- Surprising dash

Why we'd leave it:
- Impoverished for casual
- First character 'assist'
- A bit underpowered

09

PlayStation 2 NERDICT



EXTREME-G 3

Go on, straddle a 1000mph Jet Bike and feel the throb of pure atomic power betwixt your legs.

Publisher: Acclaim Developer: Acclaim Cheltenham
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Anyone who has ever watched *Tron* or *Akira* and not thought to themselves, 'Wow, wouldn't it be amazing to drive one of those impossibly fast bikes through some futuristic metropolis', is a big girl's blouse. There's no two ways about it. Which is why the arrival of *Extreme-G 3* should have fans of those two films convulsing with excitement. This is spleen-crushingly intense sci-fi racing.

From the very beginning, two things are clear: this is an extremely polished game and it borrows heavily from *WipeOut*. The Designers Republic-style fonts on the menu screens, the pumping licensed soundtrack [in this case

provided by Ministry Of Sound], the swooping futuristic circuits, air brakes on the triggers, weapons... We've seen 'em all in *Psygnosis'* series. The thing about *Extreme-G 3* is that it steals just the right amount of *WipeOut* DNA to get the organic process going, then injects enough of its own

cellular gunk to make the game more than just another wannabe.

The handling is totally different - this being a bike and not a hovering spacecraft. Left and right movement is adequately, not overly twitchy, and cornering is superfast once you get the hang of under-using the airbrakes and relying on dampening the acceleration

instead. You also have a speed booster which can be powered up by driving over energy lanes on each track. This produces speeds that you could only witness by fast-forwarding a taped F1 race. Oh, and that's just in the game's Racing Class One. There are four classes in all,

// By the end of the game you'll be breaking the sound barrier within seconds of starting a race //

each adding many miles per hour to the gauge. By the end of the game you'll be breaking the sound barrier within seconds of starting a race.

Backing up the visceral thrills are ten well-designed and amazingly detailed circuits. To take a random pick, 'Atradaitsi' is a breathtaking romp through a bustling megacity with spaceships buzzing by and neon ads everywhere; 'Oceania' takes you beneath the ocean in a series of claustrophobic glass tubes; and 'Verdegrand' has you diving through looming cliffs and sunny valleys before suddenly plunging inside a cliff via a long, red twisting tunnel. It's like strapping yourself to the nose cone of a MIG-21 and flying straight between the buttocks of hell.

But this game will not be everyone's cup of adrenaline. The structure has you playing the same nine tracks four times at increasing skill levels to access the final track and this is a Herculean task. Many of you might balk at having to repeatedly attempt the same circuits, others may feel that EG3 strays a little too close to *WipeOut* for comfort. They may have a point. But at least give this stylish game a chance before opting for *WipeOut Fusion*. Especially if you've ever watched *Tron* or *Akira* and thought to yourself...

■ Keith Stuart

EXTREME-G 3

Why we'd buy it:
- Some beautiful circuits
- Out-muscling speed
- Cool weapons

Why we'd leave it:
- Gets tough very quickly
- Game structure might not please everyone



PlayStation 2 VERDICT

TOP OF THE PODS

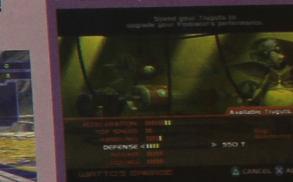
The Tournament mode gives you the opportunity to pick a racer and guide him - or in most cases 'it' - through a 13-race season. Here's how it works.



Ben Quadinaros pilots a four-engined pod. While this extra thrust gives him some good acceleration, his un-customised machine has a slow top speed and poor armour plating.



Entering the first competition, the Mos Espa Open, the technical limitations of Ben's pod aren't too much of a hindrance. Three laps, some conservative boosting and victory!



Pick up 2,200 Truguts for winning and you can then invest the cash on pod improvements. More acceleration? Better armour? Increase the top speed? You decide, then it's onto the next race.



The four-engined pod of racer Ben Quadinaros skims through Mos Espa.

STAR WARS: RACER REVENGE

Gentlemen, alien creatures of all descriptions... Start your engines! It's time for some futuristic racing *Star Wars*-style.

Publisher: Activision Developer: LucasArts
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Few would argue that the pod racing sequence is one of the best bits of *The Phantom Menace* and its visceral high speed action is ideally suited to videogame translation. It's hardly surprising then that LucasArts turned it into *Star Wars: Racer* for N64 and now *Star Wars: Racer Revenge* for PS2. This sequel is an all-new, highly polished title with original tracks, extra pods and a blistering turn of pace.

The events of *Racer Revenge* are set eight years after the first game, so it features a polygonal Hayden Christensen as Anakin Skywalker. Imagine, if you will, that the ponytailed Padawan has sneaked away from his Jedi training to compete in the new pod racing season. The rebellious teen is just one of over 16 different pod pilots that you can select for any of the game's three main modes - Single Play, Versus and Tournament.

The real meat of the game is the Tournament mode, a 13-race season that encompasses three mini-competitions. After selecting one of the available pod racers (new characters are unlocked as you win races in this mode) you compete in back-to-back contests over five planets. To progress to the next track, you need to zoom home in third place or above. Fail to finish in the top three

Keep an eye on the pod damage (bottom left) and the temperature of your turbo (bottom right).



measured by six gauges: Acceleration, Top Speed, Handling, Defence, Repair and Cooling. You can improve these six technical areas by buying new parts at Watto's junk shop. Improving your racer's top speed will increase your chances of winning, while upping its defence level will strengthen the pod against damage. Similarly, spending your hard-won Truguts on repairs will shorten the time it takes for any damage to be patched up, while improving the cooling system will allow you to use the turbo boost longer. These elements combine to make a racing game that's involving and exciting to play.

Surprisingly, the feeling of raw speed in the early races is disappointing. But once you've souped up your pod, the gameplay gets faster and harder, and the racers become more aggressive. From the forests of Gamorr to the canyons of Tatooine, you fight to maintain your

// Once you've souped up your pod, the gameplay gets faster, harder and more aggressive //

speed as you twist and turn around the courses, all of which have multiple pathways and short cuts. Rival racers violently jostle for position, actively ramming you off the track into trees or walls. You don't have time to think, you simply react, anticipating that next bend, dodging that boulder, juggling the boost and repair functions to stay ahead of the pack.

Still, controlling a pod doesn't get much more complicated than accelerate, brake and steer. An extra Each pod has its own set of handling characteristics,

turbo button allows limited bursts of acceleration, while pressing the repair button sacrifices engine power to devote energy to fixing any damage.

Racer Revenge is big on atmosphere. The main *Star Wars* theme is guaranteed to turn heads, while the races are a roar of howling engines, screaming turbos and inane chatter from the alien commentator. As for the visuals, they reflect the *Star Wars* universe extremely well with distinctive characters and environments. There are also some nice effects: smoking engines, rain, dust kicked up on desert tracks. Holding down the turbo boost, rocket-powered acceleration (although, the resulting haze makes it difficult to see anything).

Slack, playable and, at times, captivating, *Racer Revenge* is also too easy. We completed the Tournament mode in half-a-day. But with further races to unlock, hidden extras to find and lap records to beat, it's a game that can be replayed for as long as you feel that need for speed. ■ Dean Evans

STAR WARS: RACER REVENGE

Why we'd buy it:
- Exciting blend of sci-fi and Star Wars
- Subtly atmospheric

Why we'd leave it:
- The game is hard to beat
- The 3D is hardly breathtaking



PlayStation 2 VERDICT

G-SURFERS

Feel the g-force in a futuristic racer complete with a groundbreaking track editor.



From this sort of height it's key to make a smooth landing, otherwise your craft takes on damage.

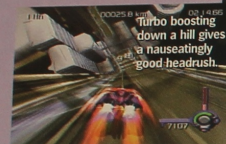
Publisher: Midas Interactive Developer: Blade Interactive Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Future racing games come in two basic flavours: your WipeOut type of weapons-based racer, where power-ups are almost as vital as driving skill; and your N64 F-Zero-style game, in which the only thing that separates winners from roadkill is an impossibly light touch on the joystick.

G-Surfers takes its cue from Nintendo's title, in as much as you have to feel your way around sweeping corners, easing your craft towards the racing line while maintaining sufficiently delicate control to prevent the back end sliding out of shape. There are power-ups to be found and the fierce AI of the computer drivers means the slightest mistake will be punished by the loss of two or three hard-won places.

The tracks spiral around mountains and through cities, rising to giddy heights before plunging back to Earth. Short cuts and jumps are placed liberally throughout the 30-race championship that comprises the game's standard One- and Two-player modes, and finishing in the top five of a race unlocks the next in the series. Barring the huge scale of the tracks, which can stretch for hundreds of miles, there's little new here. What elevates G-Surfers above the mundane is an option called Trackman.

This is the most comprehensive editing tool ever to grace a console title. While ordinary track editors restrict you to placing Scalextric-style road segments, Trackman lets you draw free-form shapes around topographical features on a satellite map of the entire globe. The tracks can be made to perform any number of movements, and



Turbo boosting down a hill gives a nauseatingly good headrush.



Too much speed on the brow of a hill will make your craft zoom off.

since Trackman is the tool the developers used to build the preset courses, it isn't beyond the realms of possibility to create something as impressive as the built-in courses. Although the PS2 will show signs of struggling if you put too much on a track,

In fact, it's these technical limitations that ultimately derail G-Surfers. To create a game that moves huge environments at such high speeds, the tracks and scenery are, by necessity, blandly textured and lacking in detail. Less forgivable is the rather shaky frame rate: the game never moves with the smoothness of WipeOut Fusion. And so, despite the genius that is Trackman, G-Surfers can only be considered as an average alternative to the futuristic big boys. **■ Martin Kitts**

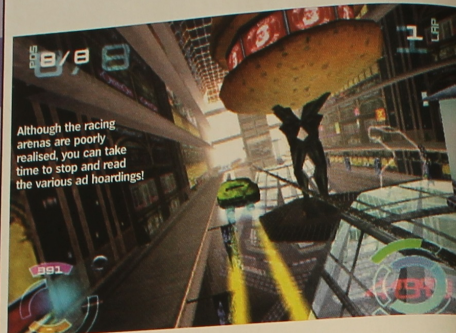
G-SURFERS

Why we'd buy it:
- Outstanding track editor
- Unlimited worlds
- Fast with subtle handling

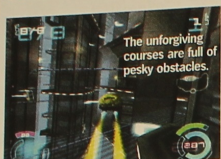
Why we'd leave it:
- Rly frame rate
- Nowhere near as good as WipeOut Fusion

05

PlayStation 2 VERDICT



Although the racing arenas are poorly realised, you can take time to stop and read the various ad hoardings!



The unforgiving courses are full of pesky obstacles.



Two-player games are just a monotonous fight to the finish.

NYR: NEW YORK RACE

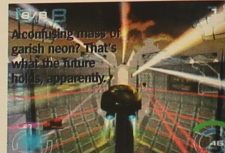
The Fifth Element arrives on PS2 in hovercar racing form. How original is that?!!

Publisher: Wanadoo Developer: Kalisto Entertainment Price: £39.99 Players: 1-8 Out: Now

When a patchy slice of sci-fi hokum like The Fifth Element provides the basis for two videogames, you know developers are struggling to find inspiration. First there was an average platform game on PSone many moons ago and now this – a sub-standard WipeOut clone.

NYR is inspired by the only decent aspect of the movie: the futuristic highways where wheels and Tarmac are banished in favour of sleek flying machines that weave in and out of the architecture at speeds of up to 500mph. Playing as Korben Dallas – Bruce Willis's character in his hovering NY cab – a roadless Big Apple of the future should make for an exciting racing arena but, as you'll soon discover, movement is restricted to a predetermined course from which it's impossible to stray.

NYR is so unforgiving that a faultless race can often be ruined by one minor



Alarming mass of garish neon? That's what the future looks like, apparently.

mistake on the final bend that enables the chasing pack to pounce on the post. There's a selection of power-ups that'll help in your goal, such as supersonic speed boosts and homing missiles, but they all look the same and it's a lucky dip in terms of what you get.

NYR runs smoothly and controlling your chosen craft can be quite absorbing. Fundamentally though, the game is marred by mediocre gameplay and visuals that fail to convey any of the atmosphere from Luc Besson's blockbuster. **■ Ryan Butt**

NYR: NEW YORK RACE

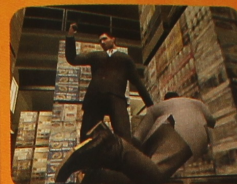
Why we'd buy it:
- Smooth handling

Why we'd leave it:
- Lacks atmosphere
- Poor visuals
- Influences too often

05

PlayStation 2 VERDICT

ARE YOU REALLY GETTING THE FULL PICTURE?



THE GETAWAY

■ Exclusive DVD interview with the team behind Sony's epic.



LORD OF THE RINGS

■ Exclusive new shots of EAs The Two Towers.
■ Exclusive screenshots and video footage of Vivendi's Fellowship of the Ring.



MAT HOFFMAN'S PRO BMX 2

■ World exclusive review.
■ World exclusive DVD documentary showing Mat in action – you'll find it hard to believe your eyes.



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TOCA – First independent review!
COLIN MCRAE – Hands-on verdict!
BURNOUT 2 – Exclusive shots!
FF10 – Finish the game now!

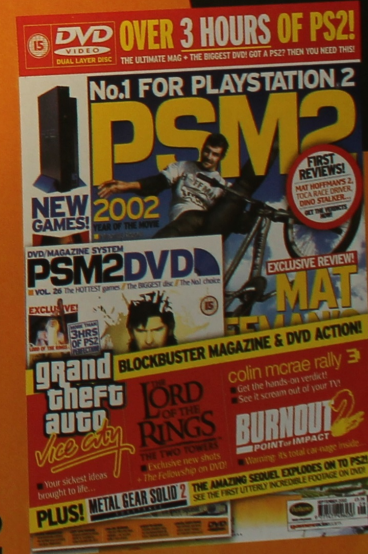
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THE NEED FOR SPEED

The racing game is now almost thirty years old. But how did we get from the black and white basics of *Night Driver* to the glory of *Gran Turismo*? Here's our selection of the most important racing genres and most influential racing games, plucked from the multi-storey car park of history...

WORDS: KEITH STUART

While you're marvelling at the ultra-realistic car models and lush scenery of *TOCA Race Driver*, spare a thought for the racing game fan of the Seventies. The first proper car driving title of all time – Atari's forgotten effort *Gran Trak 10* – didn't arrive until 1974 and was a laughably basic black and white, top-down affair with a single car competing against the stopwatch. Things got slightly better in 1975 with Kee Games' *Indy 800*, an enormous eight-player racer, still top-down and still black and white but at least you could race against other cars. A year later, Atari took things a little further with *Night Driver*, the first game to use a 'realistic' in-car view. Suddenly, afro-headed Seventies kids had the thrill of watching a white block converging toward a featureless monochrome horizon. It wasn't really until Sega's *Turbo* (1981) and, more importantly, Namco's 1982 smash *Pole Position* that driving games really began to look like, err, driving games. *Pole Position*'s 3D-alike visuals, Fuji circuit setting and inclusion of a qualifying lap led to enormous success with realism-hungry gamers. Consequently, other developers began to abandon the at the time dominant overhead view and explore the visual possibilities offered by new, more powerful hardware. At that point the genre took off like a nitrous oxide-fuelled Ford Capri, exploding into a dozen flaming sub-genres and sub-sub-genres. Confused? Pah, we haven't even started yet.



From the basic gameplay and monochrome visuals of Atari's *Night Driver* (left) to the ultra-realism of *TOCA Race Driver* on PS2 (right), the racing game has travelled a long, long way in the last 26 years.

ARCADE RACERS

Coin-op racing games were always designed to capture the attention quickly and to ensure hardly anyone lasted longer than two minutes. Later, with the advent of home consoles and computers, the term 'arcade racer' was applied to any title that concentrated on immediate thrills rather than complex simulation. Here are the key trailblazers in the genre.



OUTRUN

(Sega AM2/1986/Arcade)

Design guru Yu Suzuki's ambition with this laid-back racer was to capture the feeling of cruising in a fast car with the radio blaring, the sun in your eyes and a hot babe at your side. Not bad for 30p a go. The game features a Ferrari-style convertible careering through five stages of differently themed highways, avoiding traffic and aiming for tougher and tougher checkpoints. It was one of the first racers to offer a selection of different routes and, famously, provide three separate soundtracks (including the legendary Magical Sound Shower). Back in its day, Outrun also looked fantastic with bright colours, big detailed sprites and parallax scrolling. Gameplay-wise, it was hugely challenging, featuring dips and hills at a time when most racers were totally flat. Plus, the precociously complex handling allowed for the combined use of gear shift, brake and accelerator to pull off super speed cornering. Anyone who failed to master this simply pretended they were in Miami Vice for thirty glorious seconds before smashing into the back of a lorry.



GEAR BOX

See what condition your transmission is in.



Gears have been a vital element of the driving game since the beginning. At first there were simple two stage 'high' or 'low' transmissions. Later, realistic racers added four and even six gears. The automatic option has always been looked down upon. A flyer for Kee Game's 1974 title Twin Racer boasted of its Automatic Drive button for 'ladies and kids'.



NEED FOR SPEED

(Electronic Arts/1994/3DO)

This beautifully presented driver was a high-point for the doomed 3DO console. Offering eight super cars, including the Porsche 911 and Lamborghini Diablo, it was one of the first games to revel in providing a range of realistic, desirable motors. The A-to-B circuits take in alpine, coastal and highway locations and the presence of traffic on the roads adds to the challenge. Handling feels firm and weighty – pre-empting the likes of Gran Turismo and Colin McRae Rally.



LOTUS ESPRIT TURBO CHALLENGE

(Gremlin Graphics/1990/Arcade)

A slick, fast and hugely playable racer from British developers Gremlin Graphics and Magnetic Fields. Boasts a great split-screen mode, loads of terrain (snow, sand, icy, rainy) and obstacles like barriers and oil slicks to weave around. Also has a pit feature, forcing tactical fuel stops. Plus, when you finished the game you were given a code which you sent to Gremlin to get a winner's certificate (according to the editor, Mr Lee Hart, he was the 48th person in the country to achieve this).

DAYTONA USA

(Sega AM2/1994/Arcade)

Combines the true 3D visuals of Virtua Racing with the brutal thrills and super-tuned motors of stock car racing. 40 cars compete across three circuits loaded with scenic detail. The Model 2 arcade board handles 300,000 textured polys a second, making for a smooth racing experience. Importantly, the handling mixes realism and arcade exaggeration so slipstreaming and vehicle damage meet head-on with OTT powersliding. Simply one of the finest coin-ops ever made.



SEGA RALLY

(Sega AM3/1995/Arcade)

Another superb Sega racer, this time from AM3 (Tetsuya Mizuguchi, creator of Space Channel Five and Rez, was a lead designer on the game). Mixes slightly firmer, Daytona-style handling with three hugely challenging, generally offroad, courses and two actual rally cars – the Toyota Celica GT and Lancia Delta HF Integrale. The massive popularity of the game legitimised videogame rallying, leading to all the later simulations such as Colin McRae Rally and V-Rally.



CRAZY TAXI

(Sega/1999/Arcade/Dreamcast/PS2)

Sega's unique urban driver has you ferrying the public around a San Francisco-alike city, earning as much cash as possible within the time limit. Gameplay is typically Sega: easy to get into but challenging to master. Anything goes – short cuts up alleyways, driving on the pavement, jumps off the back of stationary vans. Moves like the Crazy Jump and Crazy Boost require deft timing and coordination but learning them is vital if you're to progress. A bright, brash and innovative diversion.



RIDGE RACER

(Namco/1993-present day/Arcade/PSone/PS2)

Namco's chic series began as a direct arcade competitor to Sega's Daytona USA, but has since become a PlayStation staple with four bestselling sequels. Handling is heavily stylised and essentially based around a range of power drifts accessible through different combinations of brake and accelerator. PlayStation-only sequels such as Ridge Racer and Ridge Racer V added new elements to the structure, including tune-up options and a huge range of unlockable (litterous) car models, but the gameplay never strays from its arcade roots. The scenic flights of fancy introduced by the original Ridge Racer –



animating ads for other Namco games, long twisting tunnels and aircraft whizzing overhead – have been shamelessly nicked by just about every subsequent street racer.

COIN-OP CABINETS OF CURIOSITY



By the early Eighties, the booming market in home computer games meant arcade machine makers had to look for new gimmicks to pull in players. Luxury cabinets complete with novelty sit-down cockpits did the job for a while, with Namco's Pole Position (featuring a totally enclosed sit-down affair leading the way. In the mid-Eighties, R&D teams began experimenting with

'haptic' interfaces – i.e. games you control by actually replicating the movements you need in the real-life events [the Hang-On bike that allows you to lean into corners, the Enduro Racer handlebars that need to be pulled down to affect a jump] and ultimately hydraulics. The Outrun deluxe cabinet lets you sit in a mini-Ferrari which turns in conjunction with the steering wheel. The Power Drift sit-in buggy interface banks 20° in time with on-screen action. Modern coin-ops – forced to compete with visually equal console games – are ever more elaborate. Take the F355 Challenge cabinet (pictured): it has three screens and even gives you a print-out analysing your performance at the end of the race!

TOP TEN KEY ELEMENTS OF THE RACING GAME



1. The steering wheel

A part of driving games since Gran Turismo 10. Early digital wheels would spin forever in either direction. In the '80s realistic analogue wheels took over. The first home wheel came with a conversion of Sega's Turbo for the ColecoVision console in 1982.



2. Engine noise

Atari's 1974 coin-op Gran Trak 10 was the pace-setter with realistic engine, skidding and crash noises. Later developers like Polyphony Digital and Bizarre Creations (pictured) began to sample real cars to get authentic engine notes and sound emissions.



3. Scenery

Sega's Turbo (1981) upped the scenic ante with urban areas sporting street lamps and skyscrapers, as well as country locations. In a recent, major advance, Bizarre Creations intricately replicated areas of London, Tokyo and San Fran for MSR using video footage.



4. 'Plonk back'

A 'technical' term for when your car is returned to the track after a crash. Too quick and there's no real penalty, too slow and it's frustrating. A few games have added realism: In Super Sprint a helicopter puts you back onto the track, in Stunt Car Racer a crane.



5. Force feedback

A term applied when the controller (or cabinet) vibrates when you're on rough ground or when a steering wheel offers actual resistance to movement. Replicating real racing physics. Sega innovated with Hang-On, the hydraulic Outrun cabinet and Virtua Racing.



6. A.I.

Early computer opponents would follow a pre-set 'racing line'. Later, they were programmed to react in real time to the circuit and other vehicles, swerving to get in or out of the way and making mistakes. Key examples are the F1 GP and TOCA series.



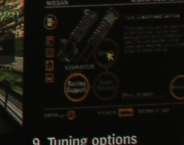
7. Catch-up

A system that allows racers at the rear of the pack to catch up with the rest by slowing the others down. As a result by slowing the others down, as a system that allows racers at the rear of the pack to catch up with the rest by slowing the others down. As a result by slowing the others down, as a system that allows racers at the rear of the pack to catch up with the rest by slowing the others down.



8. The powerslide

A handling quirk usually achieved by braking, accelerating and turning simultaneously, sending the car into a slide. If controlled, it's a useful method of quickly cornering or overtaking. Pioneered by the likes of Super Mario Kart, Daytona USA and Ridge Racer.



9. Tuning options

The F3 racer Revs (BBC Micro, 1984) was one of the first to offer sim-style car tweaking. Atari's Super Sprint allowed players to improve grip, speed and acceleration – a more arcadey approach. Gran Turismo is the ultimate in vehicle tuning.



10. Damage

Although visual damage to car models is a new-ish phenomenon (Atari's 1988 title Chase HQ was a pioneer), technical damage goes back to Pistop II where tyres suffer increased wear on the trackside. Colin McRae 3 is set to take damage to new levels.

DRIVING SIMULATIONS

When driving games spun out of the arcade and onto home platforms in the early Eighties, a new audience demanded more from the experience than three minutes of cheap thrills in a speeding Ferrari. Hence realistic handling, advanced physics, a choice of vehicles and learning curves as steep and treacherous as alpine passes.



HARD DRIVIN'

[Atari/1988/Arcade]

The first true 3D driver was not *Virtua Racing* but this often overlooked sim, which also made revolutionary use of force feedback controls (in other words the steering wheel shook in conjunction with the onscreen action) for added realism. Features a car clearly based on the Ferrari Testarossa and a range of interesting stunt courses including Evel Knievel-style jumps and a 360° loop – a clear influence on the Amiga classic *Stunt Car Racer*. Players can also compete in a race against a 'ghost car' which represents the performance of the previous record holder for that lap. This has since become a standard element of the driving game Time Trial mode.



GRAN TURISMO

(Polyphony Digital/1997-present day/PSone/PS2) Perhaps the ultimate driving game series, *Gran Turismo* is all things to all people. The extensive, exhausting GT mode is a petrolhead's heaven, jammed with tuning options, licenses and championships. The Arcade mode simply lets boy racers revel in the incredible handling which somehow manages to accurately replicate the torque, cornering, acceleration and sound of hundreds of sexy motors. And, crucially, the game has never been about unattainable super cars. It's about desirable production cars: the Skylines, the Imprezas, the Lancer Evolutions. The kind of vehicles raced on the highways of Tokyo (a practice which no doubt inspired the game) and sunburned strips of LA (just about every car in *The Fast and the Furious* is in GT). Plus, since *Gran Turismo 2* there's even been a Rally mode for those who prefer skidding in the mud to trying to stay on the Tarmac.

For many PS2 owners, *Gran Turismo 3* is the only driving game they'll ever need. Until GT4 arrives...



TOCA TOURING CARS

[Codemasters/1998-present day/PSone/PC/PS2]

This more mainstream forerunner to *Colin McRae* features realistically modelled touring cars tearing round accurately reproduced circuits like Silverstone and Brands Hatch. Gameplay-wise it's an innovative meeting of *Daytona USA* and *Gran Turismo*: mixing arcade elements such as bumps, crashes and close-packed racing (there are 16 jostling cars on track at once) with real handling depth and superb opponent AI. For those turned off by the obsessive car upgrading of GT and the anal vehicle contact-avoidance of F1 sims, the series has proved an exciting introduction to real motorsport. The latest version, *TOCA Racer Driver*, is coming to PS2 in September. Check out page 28 for a preview.



COLIN MCRAE RALLY

[Codemasters/1998-present day/PSone/PC/PS2]

The first quality rally game to simulate the actual gruelling time trial basis of the sport – with players competing, not against other drivers, but against a series of hair-raising offroad stages and a stopwatch. The different terrains and road conditions are brilliantly replicated and the handling is robust, yet sensitive and slidy, providing an exciting, seat-of-the-pants drive. Mr McRae himself loves it and has been constantly consulted through the development of the series, which also takes in car maintenance and repair tactics. The long-awaited third game in the series is on its way to PS2, premiering a new, even more realistic Championship mode (see the preview on p14-17) as well as realistic windscreen wipers!



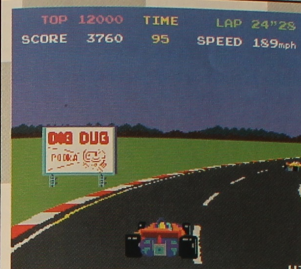
F355 CHALLENGE

[Sega AM2/1999/Arcade/Dreamcast]

This scarily realistic sim – actually designed in conjunction with engineers from the Italian car manufacturer – was Ferrari fanatic Yu Suzuki's dream project when he began work on it in the late-Nineties. The handling is so realistic it takes most people a couple of weeks just to get through the training modes, let alone finish a race in the top three. To enhance the authenticity yet further, the coin-op version has three screens to provide drivers with better ambient vision and players are given a print-out analysing their performance at the end of the race. Essentially a landmark title due to its use of advanced physics models to provide totally accurate and in-depth driving. A PS2 version is arriving soon.

FORMULA ONE

Unsurprisingly, the biggest motor sport in the world is also the most simulated. In the early days, the scenically limited circuits and simple car models made F1 especially popular with 8-bit developers. And now, attempting to capture the technical and strategic sides of the sport keeps modern teams pushing that hot rubber envelope. It's the racing genre that just keeps giving.



POLE POSITION

[Namco/1982/Arcade]

Namco's hugely successful F1 racer – running on the then cutting edge Z80 processor – basically set the tone for driving games for the next ten years with its 'behind the car' view and use of sprite scaling (a process of uniformly changing the size of onscreen objects which creates the 'approaching scenery' effect in 2D driving games). *Pole Position* was also the first racer to use a real circuit (Fuji) and it introduced a qualifying lap feature so players had to gain a good time to get a decent starting position for the main Grand Prix mode (in which the use of checkpoints was another innovation). A sequel featuring four circuits followed in '83 as did a cartoon based on the game – one of the first videogame to TV crossovers.

PITSTOP II

[Epyx/1984/C64/Apple II]

This groundbreaking racer from legendary 8-bit developer Epyx features two-player split screen racing and a tactical, interactive pitstop element allowing drivers to change tires and refuel mid-race. To extend the gameplay beyond the standard checkpoint-based experience, Epyx added a Grand Circuit mode which simulates a full-ish Grand Prix season with six real circuits including Brands Hatch and Hockenheim. Typically for the era, the team didn't apply for any official licenses and merely reproduced the courses without permission. Along with Geoff Crammond's 1984 racer *Revs* on the BBC Micro (actually an F3 racer), this was the beginning of the in-depth Formula One simulation.



VIRTUA RACING

[Sega/1992/Arcade]

The late '80s and early '90s saw a flurry of F1 titles all adding new features to the Pole Position basics – for example, Namco's *Final Lap* (1987) introduced cabinet link-ups, while Taito's *Continental Circus* (1988) brought weather. The real epoch-shatterer though, was *Virtua Racing* – the first title in Sega's 3D virtual reality series. The game used simple flat-shaded car models and circuits, like *Hard Drivin'* and Namco's *Winning Run* (1989), but was revolutionary thanks to the hi-tech Model 1 hardware capable of pushing out polygons at 180,000 a second for smooth, rather than slow and jumpy, 3D visuals. *Virtua Racing* also introduced selectable camera views (there are four to choose from). The dawn of the modern racer.



(Above) The hugely influential original *FLGP* (below) *Grand Prix 4*, the current benchmark for hardcore F1 simulation.



FORMULA ONE GRAND PRIX

[Microprose/1991-present day/Amiga/PC]

Created by driving sim godfather Geoff Crammond, *Formula One Grand Prix* is the grand-daddy of the modern F1 simulation. The innovative cockpit view, smooth 3D visuals and inclusion of all 16 world circuits lent the game an unparalleled visual authenticity. But the most important element was the realistic simulation model. Using data provided by now defunct F1 team Footwork (as well as speed figures shown during a TV transmission of an Ayrton Senna qualifying lap), FLGP gave motorsport anoraks a tough, challenging taste of real Formula One driving. A taste further heightened by some technical tweaking options and tentative TV-style presentation (a precursor to the elaborate, 'watch the replays via the real ITV camera positions' malarkey of today's racers). Three sequels have followed so far, with Crammond still carrying out most of the engine and AI programming himself. For F1 GP2 (1996) Microprose snagged an official FIA license allowing the use of all the driver, team and circuit names of the 1994 season. Crammond also improved and added detail to the driving physics. This was the biggest hit in the series to date, attracting a massive Internet community – mostly because someone managed to create a map editor for the game, allowing fans to build their own circuits. *Grand Prix 4*, offering hi-tech gubbins like true 3D sound and tracks re-constructed from GPS data, will be hitting the shelves right about now.

FORMULA FATIGUE

F1 sims are usually lumbered with a dull F1 [insert year] title. But here are some rebels...

1. *Continental Circus* [Taito, 1988] It was meant to be *Continental Circuit*, but a translation error led to this far more amusing name. Clowns in Ferrari!
2. *Heavenly Symphony* [Sega, 1994] Rather grandiose title for a straightforward Mega CD Formula One game.
3. *Super Family Circuit* [Namco, 1994] Nice top-down SNES racer. Perhaps used 'Family' in the title because the pit-crew's curiously pink overalls attracted the ladies.
4. *Ace Driver Victory Lap* [Namco, 1996] Namco obviously couldn't think of a single title for this arcade racer. So they gave it about four.
5. *Hungaroring* [Novotrade, 1988] Yes, we know it's the F1 circuit in Hungary but it's still a stupid name.



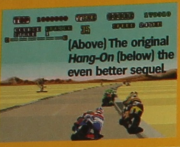
MOTORBIKES

In videogames, as in life, motorbikes represent an offbeat, minority interest. The leaning-into-corners motion has always been a nightmare for developers to simulate, as has the sheer engine-throbbing-between-legs excitement of sitting on a flimsy metallic object that's travelling at 140mph. Some notable titles have had a decent bash, however...

HANG-ON

(Sega/1985-87/Arcade)

The first racing game Yu Suzuki worked on for Sega was this benchmark biking sim, boasting blistering speed, smooth handling and five circuits taking in alpine, seaside, circuit and city locations raced through in the usual 'pass the checkpoints to keep playing' system. The original bike-shaped cabinet let you control the game by actually leaning into corners – an early hint at Suzuki's obsession with handling realism. Super Hang-On (1987) improved on the recipe with better visuals, new, more complex circuits and a cool nitro boost feature. Sadly, Yu Suzuki has yet to return to the biking oeuvre, although Sega has been back with Harley Davidson & LA Riders.



(Above) The original Hang-On (below) the even better sequel.

INCREDIBLE OVERSIGHT

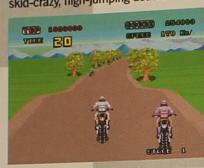
"Hi, I'm Evel Knievel, you may remember me from such crazy stunts as that one where I f---ed my head in trying to clear Snake River Canyon on a missile. What was I thinking?! Anyway, what I want to know is, why is there no PS2 Knievel game? It would have stunts and bell-bottomed jumpsuits!"



ENDURO RACER

(Sega/1986/Arcade)

Superb dirt bike coin-op with a great novelty cabinet – you sit on a reproduction bike and push down the handlebars at the correct moments to get the onscreen rider to jump. This can be used to clear logs and boulders or cheekily nip over barriers for a short cut. The dirt bike genre has been attempted intermittently since, with the likes of N64's Excitebike and MX 2002 on PS2 offering similar skid-crazy, high-jumping action.



ROAD RASH

(EA/1991/Mega Drive)

Fun illegal racing game where riders speed along to a hard raw soundtrack, punching each other off their bikes while trying to avoid both oncoming traffic and police cars which attempt to shunt you off the various US highways. At the end of each stage it's possible to buy bigger bikes – already a standard feature of console racers by this time. Several inferior sequels have followed across various 16 and 32-bit formats.

KART RACERS

Now associated with lazy licence cash-ins [we've lost count of how many big movies and cartoons have been turned into 'fun' kart-'em-ups], this genre was once about super fast impulse driving and crazed circuit design, free from the tyranny of realism. Taito's 1984 coin-op Buggy Challenge arguably foreshadowed the genre but here are three genuine karting classics.

SUPER MARIO KART

(Nintendo/1992-present day/SNES/GBA)

Nintendo's legendary kart racer is a masterclass in pinpoint gameplay balance. Eight karts with different handling characteristics compete in a series of cups across three vehicle classes. Every imaginative, fiendishly challenging circuit is strewn with power-ups, weapons and boosts all now grindingly familiar thanks to a billion inferior copycats. An N64 update turned up in 1996 but the gameplay balance



was poor and fans of the original hated it (despite the four-player split-screen option). The recent GBA remake of Super Mario Kart recaptured the magic.

PETS WIN RACES

The odd world of animal racing games In 1984 Konami released a silly penguin racer named Antarctic Adventure. This should have been a one-off perversion. But no. In 1997 Namco produced the arcade romp Armadillo Racing, then we had Pen Pen Tricelcon on Dreamcast with racing sharks, hippos and, yes, penguins. Even Sonic has been a victim with the, admittedly great, Saturn racer Sonic R. Obviously, Super Monkey Ball is the best.

CRASH TEAM RACING

(Naughty Dog/1999/PSone)

The best of the recent swarm of Mario Kart-style licensed racers – but up against trash like Super Bombad Racing, Looney Tunes Space Race and South Park Rally that's not saying too much. Importantly, CTR perfectly replicates Mario Kart's power-ups and use of well-known game characters, while adding some of its own new twists and great circuit design. Let's hope the makers of future licensed kart games take note.

DESTRUCTION

As JG Ballard quite rightly identified in his cult perv sci-fi novel Crash, there's something strangely alluring about the auto-wreck. Why else would the dodgem be a staple element of every fairground in the world? Naturally, it didn't take game makers long to catch on and turn this weird anomaly of the modern psyche into an exciting driving sub-genre!



SKY JINKS

(Activision/1982/Atari VCS)

This unusual 'against-the-clock' plane racer features five different courses (including one called 'Love Field') with players flying between pylons in a sort of aerial version of ski slalom. Subsequent planer racers include Bravo Air Race and NGEN Racing on PSone, and in the autumn Midway is releasing Freaky Flyers, a free-roaming cartoon aircraft racer for PS2. It's the unlikely sub-genre that will not die!

WAVE RACE

(Nintendo/1996/N64)

Standard-setting Jet Ski racer with amazingly realistic water effects and brilliant analogue handling which gives players full three dimensional control over the dipping, leaping Kawasaki craft. Imaginative circuit designs (which incorporate high and low tides to reveal new ramps and obstacles) complete the package. A clear influence on the likes of Jet Ski Riders and Splashdown on PS2.



18 WHEELER

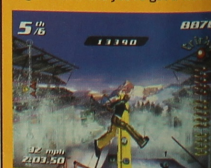
(Sega/2000/Arcade/Dreamcast/PS2)

Enjoyable truck-'em-up in which various cargoes are taken on a high-speed, stage-by-stage romp from New York to San Francisco. At its best in the arcades thanks to a cabinet which features an authentically massive steering wheel that makes swerving between other vehicles a real battle. The game also includes driving challenges like parallel parking. Not that popular with women, then...

SSX

(EA/2000/PS2)

EA's groovy series is currently the state of the art in videogame snowboarding and unlike other, more straight-faced competitors, includes a racing mode as well as the usual downhill time trials and freestyle events. The boarding physics are spot on, the feeling of swooshing over packed snow, beautifully replicated. The superior sequel, SSX Tricky, added a rivalry feature – push and shove another competitor too much and they turn against you for the next race. Add all this to ace, psychedelia-tinged visuals and you've got a winner.



DEATH RACE

(Eidos/1976/Arcade)

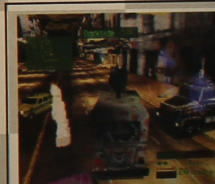
This arcade game, titled to cash in on the Roger Corman horror driving flick, has one or two players running over as many little stick men (they're meant to be gremlins) as possible. The road carnage theme attracted the first ever videogame violence controversy with several key US magazines and news programmes calling for its withdrawal. Obviously, the machine then became an enormous success.



DESTRUCTION DERBY

(Reflections/1995-96/PSone)

Early PSone stock car series from Reflections, the UK team behind Driver and Stuntman. Reversed the usual driving game objective of avoiding contact with other vehicles by actively encouraging shunts and smashes. The superior sequel brought the team's twin obsessions – realistic car dynamics and multiple pile-ups – together in perfect harmony, with flying debris and a decent replay option to show the best crashes. A new nihilistic, voyeuristic game style was born. Codemasters expanded the theme with TOCA.



TWISTED METAL

(Singletrac/1996-present day/PSone/PS2)

One of the original combat driving games – a genre possibly inspired by FPS deathmatches. A bizarre mix of vehicles (trucks, ice cream vans) with various special weapons do battle in a series of arenas. Spawned three sequels so far as well as copy-cats like Vigilante 8 (a follow-up to excellent PC muscle car romp Interstate '76). The current daddy of the genre is PS2's well 'ard Twisted Metal: Black.



CARMAGEDDON

(SCI/Stainless/1997/PC/PSone/GB)

This outrageous, irresponsible but fun urban driving game caused masses of controversy on its original release (and was banned in several countries), thanks to the Death Race-style 'points for pedestrian carnage' gameplay. Like the 1976 title, this one went all out to provoke controversy, a marketing technique later employed by DMA's similarly murderous Grand Theft Auto series. Not one for the simulation fan.

MISSION-BASED

In the mid-Eighties, videogame designers looking for a new slant on the saturated racing genre had the brilliant idea of basing the gameplay around objectives, or combining it with the arcade shoot-'em-up and the ever-popular movie car chase. These began as simple top-down 2D affairs but have become more complex and ambitious as hardware has evolved.



SPY HUNTER

(Midway/1983/Arcade)

Massively successful James Bond-style 'espionage thriller' that kick-started the adventure/driving game mini-genre. Players cruise along an endless highway using missiles and machine guns to destroy enemy vehicles in front, and oil slicks and smoke screens to nuzzle those behind. Occasional forks in the road take you into boat-controlling sections and driving onto ammo trucks gives access to new weapons (a feature apparently taken from TV's *Knight Rider*). Inspired Taito's *Chase HQ* among many others, and was recently re-animated for a quality PS2 outing.



DRIVER

(Reflections/1999-present day/PSone/PS2)

You're an undercover cop pulling gangland jobs to snare the criminal bigwigs in this cool, '70s-style car chase thriller. The brilliant sling-it-about handling (and subsequent vehicle damage), ridiculous pile-ups and great sub-games struck all the right notes with a PSone audience brought up on the likes of *Bullitt* and *The French Connection*. Look out for the hugely-anticipated third instalment coming to PS2 next year.



METROPOLIS STREET RACER

(Bizarre Creations/2000/Dreamcast)

Incredibly in-depth city racer based in painstakingly reproduced areas of London, San Francisco and Tokyo. Players compete in a variety of races and challenges where driving stylishly (i.e. pulling outrageous powerslides and making dangerous overtaking manoeuvres) rewards you with as many points as actually finishing first. A tantalising glimpse at how driving games will use photo-realistic locations in the future.



STUNTMAN

(Reflections/2002/PS2)

Innovative stunt sim from the makers of *Driver*. Stunts on five different types of Hollywood film have to be completed in conjunction with strict instructions – it's driving game meets rhythm action! Success in the movies leads to a stunt show side-game where you can create your own death-defying jump challenges. Handling and car smash physics are obsessively accurate, making this auto erotica for crash fetishists.

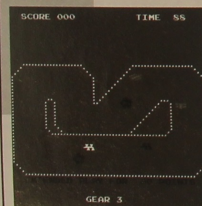
MINI-CARS

Reaching its zenith through the detailed 2D sprite work of the mid-to-late Eighties, this fun, realism-free sub-genre involved tiny cars speeding around labyrinthine circuits, often squeezed onto a single screen. Although sadly now 'missing presumed out-mode', this was one of the original, most entertaining racing game styles and it put the focus firmly on multiplayer hilarity.

SPRINT

(Atari/Kee Games/1976-86/Arcade)

The famous top-down, multiplayer racing series began with *Sprint 2* in 1976 and *Sprint 8* in 1977 (the numbers refer to the amount of players supported). The original features basic black and white graphics, single-screen circuits and oil slick hazards. The best version though, is 1986's *Super Sprint* with its crisp colour track designs, shortcuts, ramps and upgradeable cars.



IVAN 'IRONMAN' STEWART'S SUPER OFF ROAD

(Leland/1989/Arcade/Amiga)

This cult racer, released at the height of the mid-Eighties *Sprint* obsession, features tough little trucks rather than cars, and the muddy courses throw everything at the four mini off-roaders, from ramps and dips, to fiendish water hazards and speed bumps. As in *Super Sprint*, players can buy power-ups for their vehicles between races. There simply aren't enough officially endorsed mini-offroad trucking games out there anymore.



MICRO MACHINES

(Codemasters/1991-present day/NES, Master System/PC/Mega Drive/PSone) Codemasters' inspired exploitation of Galoob's tiny car toys features

imaginative household courses (tables, gardens, baths, etc), fast, responsive vehicles and a unique gameplay system – based more around staying on the track longer than anyone else, rather than just crossing the finishing line first. The huge success of the series briefly inspired a rush of similar cartoon racers, but none could replicate the winning formula of comedy and real gameplay challenge. A PS2 rendition is currently in development courtesy of Infogrames and this new version is set to take the series into true 3D.

MEN AT WORK

The art of building your own tracks.



great C64 stunt bike game *Kick Start* it featured a compelling circuit construction kit, as did *Slot Car Racer*. More recently, PSone titles *V-Rally 2* and *Moto Racer* took the concept into 3D, while PS2 *WipeOut* clone *G-Surfers* is entirely based around a powerful track editing tool. If only a GT or Colin McRae title would come up with the track editing goods.

FUTURISTIC

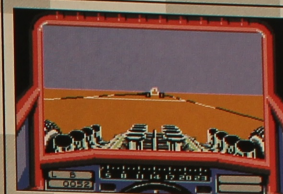
The idea of combining fast vehicles and sci-fi (let's face it, two major interests of the videogame target audience) struck game designers impressively early at Atari. It took others a bit longer to catch on, with Williams' laser disc space bike racer *Star Rider* (1983) and SNK's isometric spaceship racer *Mad Crasher* (1984) catching on first. Here are the key futuristic racers.

SPACE RACE

(Atari/1973/Arcade)

Atari's follow-up to the ground-breaking *Pong* was this very simple proto-driving game which has players guiding space craft toward the top of the screen while avoiding asteroids – a task made slightly more challenging by the lack of left or right movement. Once the ship reaches the top of the screen you start

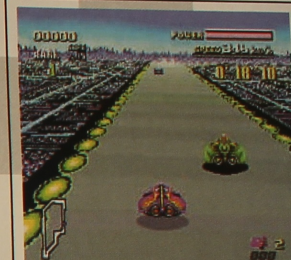
with another at the bottom and high scores are based on how many are piloted to safely within the time limit. Surprisingly, the early omens for the racing genre were not good. Neither this title, nor Atari's first proper car driving game *Gran Trak 3D* (1974) were enormously successful. Fortunately, the company persisted against idiot '70s gamers and did much better with the eight-player *Sprint* forerunner *Indy 800* in 1975. Some also see *Space Race* as a thematic predecessor to Konami's 1981 'classic' *Frogger*, which shares the same 'cross the screen safely' gameplay. But with alligators and cars rather than asteroids.



STUNT CAR RACER

(MicroStyle/1989/Amiga/PC/C64/Spectrum)

Okay, this Geoff Crammond classic (another one!) isn't strictly futuristic, but the surreal rollercoaster tracks, complete with terrifying ramps, stomach-assaulting drops and twisty banking corners are clearly not of this world. Drag race-style cars, complete with V8 engines and nitro boosters, race over a series of eight circuits, divided into four divisions. Your goal in single-player mode is to get from the bottom of div. four to, yes, the top of div. one. It's a demanding and shuntily competitive endeavour with veering, or being shunted, off the track (no girly safety barriers here) a constant threat. The 3D visuals are sparse but effective and the first-person view makes the swooping circuits even more thrilling. *Stunt Car Racer*, then, is vitally important as both a visual and gameplay innovator.



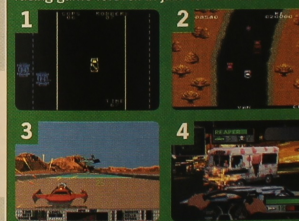
F-ZERO

(Nintendo/1990/SNES)

Nintendo's game design don Shigeru Miyamoto spent a few months away from moustachioed plumber Mario to create this SNES legend. Making stunning use of the 16-bit console's Mode 7 technology – a graphics chip allowing backgrounds to be rotated in a semi-3D style – the title offers tight, tuned gameplay across a variety of psychedelic sci-fi circuits. Updating the old oil spill hazards of the *Sprint* series, Miyamoto offers some fiendish traps including land mines and magnets. The use of different vehicles with their own strengths and weaknesses, and gameplay based around progressively more difficult championships, clearly inspired *Super Mario Kart* among many others.

ARMED AND DANGEROUS

How the introduction of weapons changed the racing game forever. In just 167 words!



It started earlier than you think. The first driving and shooting game was Atari's 1976 four-player gangster title *Cops 'n' Robbers* [1] in which gamers took on either role in a simplistic 'Pong with bullets' type affair. More influential, though, was *Spy Hunter* [2]. Game designer George Gomez combined the overhead view driving game with the *Space Invaders*-style 2D shoot-'em-up for this 1983 smash. Immediately, driving tactics became broader, with gamers tested not only on handling, but also on their ability to quickly select the correct weapons and to fire them accurately. Later, gameplay balance was made even more complex with the introduction of shields courtesy of Atari's groundbreaking 3D sci-fi racer *S.T.U.N. Runner* [3] (which also introduced speed boost areas on the track incidentally). The genre eventually cross-bred with the first-person-shooter to create the arena-based blasting action of *Twisted Metal* [4] and *Vigilante 8*. Here, gameplay has shifted entirely toward weaponry with the driving element becoming less and less important.

WIPEOUT

(SCEE/1995-present day/PSone/PS2)

Nintendo's game design don Shigeru Miyamoto spent a few months away from moustachioed plumber Mario to create this SNES legend. Making stunning use of the 16-bit console's Mode 7 technology – a graphics chip allowing backgrounds to be rotated in a semi-3D style – the title offers tight, tuned gameplay across a variety of psychedelic sci-fi circuits. Updating the old oil spill hazards of the *Sprint* series, Miyamoto offers some fiendish traps including land mines and magnets. The use of different vehicles with their own strengths and weaknesses, and gameplay based around progressively more difficult championships, clearly inspired *Super Mario Kart* among many others.



From snow sleds to eighteen wheel juggernauts, these are the racers that refuse to stick to your standard automobile.

P 96 SSX TRICKY

EA gets jiggy with the Pepsi Max generation in this groovy snowboard race and stunt fest.

P 98 SLED STORM

It's EA again, this time resurrecting it's PSone snow sled racer with funky new gameplay and visuals.

P 100 ARCTIC THUNDER

Midway's long-running Thunder series skids on to the ice for some arcade-tastic snow mobile racing.

P 100 18 WHEELER

Sega's gotta great big convoy rockin' thru the night! Parpl Parpl! That's the sound of the horn, by the way!

P 101 MOTO GP 2

The most in-depth superbike simulation you can buy, courtesy of Namco.

P 102 FREEKSTYLE

The same stable that gave us SSX Tricky now delivers this extreme slice of motorcross madness.

P 104 LE TOUR DE FRANCE

Button-bashing peddle-em-up. Almost as hard on the fingers as the real thing is on the legs.

P 105 MX 2002

Motorcross sim starring 'world famous' Ricky Carmichael.

P 105 SPLASHDOWN

PS2's best water-based racer splashes in for review.



SSX TRICKY

Did you feel that SSX just wasn't tricky enough? Fear not, because here's its even trickier half-brother. It's stunt-ageddon!

Publisher: EA Sports 'BIG' Developer: EA Sports (Canada)
Price: \$39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

One of the fundamental functions for a videogame is to put the player in a situation that we'd never ordinarily expect to be in – playing for England against Germany in Pro Evolution Soccer, for example – or to sample the thrill of something which, back in harsh reality, we wouldn't (or couldn't) do even if a cocked gun was pointing at our heads. Stunt snowboarding is one such activity. And SSX Tricky offers bone-crunching excitement in spades.

The original SSX was a sleeper smash amid a clutch of underwhelming launch titles, uniting high-speed racing and irresponsible trick-based snowboating in one graphically lavish package. It was fresh, exhilarating and gloriously realised. However, when news of an update first emerged, a cynical sigh was difficult to suppress. We needn't have worried. SSX's soul has survived. For fans, it's packed with new features, while newcomers are in for a wild ride.

SSX's premise is of an international contest held at a variety of venues. Most of SSX Tricky's tracks are the same as in the first game, but this time they've been tweaked to

accommodate a more free-spirited approach – short cuts are more numerous, while tighter physics lead to wilder trickery including upside-down rail-rides.

The most progressive change to environment design is the way the Race and Showoff versions of the same track are different, geared respectively towards either flat-out boosting or grinding and flipping. This might sound like a minor improvement but it makes a big difference. Although the original SSX tracks were superbly designed, many of them didn't freely translate from racing to trick-styling; now it really is like playing two games in one.

Another positive change is in the character design and interaction. Last time around, we had the standard stereotypes: bimbo, jock, hippy-chick, Brit. Now, although we're hardly talking Dostoyevsky, there's a little more variety and depth. In addition to returning favourites Moby, Elise, Mac and JP, new boarders include body-popping afro-guy Eddie, slinky señorita Marisol, creepy philosophy-quoting Zen dude Brodi and Psymon the psycho. This time, personalities have been fleshed out with biographies and the much-trumpeted celebrity voice-overs (Lucy Liu, Billy Zane, Macy Gray, David Arquette) are cool, with each character boasting unique cheers, jeers, goads and taunts.

ONCE IT WAS ALL FIELDS ROUND HERE

One year on, and you'll notice that building work on the old World Circuit tracks has greatly improved the SSX experience. Here are the most significant changes.



1. Snowdrum

The astonishing leaps across the main run towards the end of the course have been rendered even more spectacular, with giant inflatable snowmen to burst if you sail far enough.



2. Elysium Alps

The irritating sheets of glass in the half-pipe towards the end are now lowered, with gaps in the obstacles making them much less of a pain to negotiate.



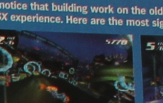
3. Mesablance

The old railway track now begins earlier and winds its way overhead before dipping deep underground, providing ample opportunity for grind combos.



4. Mercury City Meltdown

Improvements are subtle on this urban chase, but there's a cool dash through an efficient pipe added near the end. Try for a loop the loop.



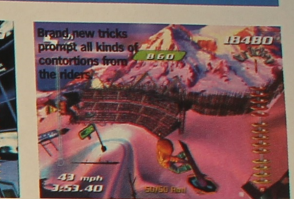
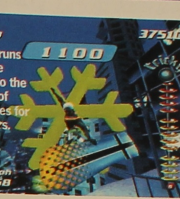
5. Tokyo Megaplex

The original game's weakest course has had a massive overhaul: a complex network of flumes and rails now encircle the main run, adding more variety. Arigato!



6. Alpha Ice Jam

Newly added to the Showoff circuit, opportunities for big air are rare here, so make the most of a lengthy rail-slide all the way to the finish line.



"It's Moby baby, yeah!" Bursting those snowflakes with SSX's loudmouthed Brit bruiser.

There's now a whole new dynamic based around character rivalry. As you progress through the World Circuit, all those sneaky shoves and shunts and forced wipeouts are logged and then translated into a pre-race breakdown of buddies, neutrals and rivals. While buddies pass with a blast of encouragement, rivals will be out to body-check you into the snow from the off. There are even post-race

second or third in Race mode and by achieving medal-winning point scores in Showoff.

The balance is perfect – as you and your rider's skill improves, the game unlocks trickier tracks and tougher Showoff challenges. As well as the overhauled original SSX venues, there are two new runs: Garibaldi, a steep, downhill track with plenty of big air for beginners to

practice tricks; and at the other end of the scale, Alaska, an insanely difficult blend of vertical ice-walls, moguls, blind curves, multiple mini-humps and a final leap into a heart-

stopping void that leads to the biggest of big air. The developer has also tinkered with the trick system, transforming the game into a festival of multi-trickery. The word 'Tricky' is now spelt out at the top of the boost meter. Pull off enough stunts to max-out the meter, and Run DMC suggests that, 'It's tricky to rock a rhyme... that's right on time... IT'S TRICKY!' You'll now have 20 seconds to perform an air-hungry uber-trick by timing a grab with a tweak of @. Your boarder now does something utterly unfeasible and a letter of 'Tricky' turns red – you're then invited to try a different uber-trick. Succeed in lighting all six letters and you're rewarded with infinite maximum boost and, possibly, the capacity to pull off the much-

While buddies pass with a blast of encouragement, rivals will bodycheck you from the off//

SNOW WORRIES

To reassure any SSX diehards fearing the worst, the basic essence of the game has barely changed. The action is still fixed around a cycle of tricks equals boost equals better tricks equals more boost. After honing your skills in Practice mode, the main single-player game means taking a Novice character through the two branches of World Circuit mode: Race and Showoff. You open up new tracks and get a chance to beef up those stats by placing first,

rumoured super-uber trick. Infinite boost gives you a massive advantage in races, if you feel like taking the risk of so much tricking around during a speed run; when uber-tricks are combined with spins and standard tricks, the capacity for gigantic point-scoring in Showoff mode is absolutely huge.

Niggles are minor. Even frame rate freaks will find little to criticise – despite the extra detail and more complex content, there are far fewer incidents of slowdown here than in the original game. Control-wise, it'd be useful to be able to cancel tricks which start to look doomed, in the way moves can be cancelled in some of the later Street Fighter games, but there's not much else wrong.

SSX Tricky can't be classed as a stand-alone sequel, and EA has never touted it as such. But the developer has polished SSX in practically every area, managing to achieve the near-impossible task of pleasing both fans and newcomers alike. Uber, indeed. ■ Andy Lowe

SSX TRICKY

Why we'd buy it:
- Enthrallingly addictive
- Rewarding challenges
- Great speed and visuals

Why we'd leave it:
- Not really a sequel
- EA Juggers not in it

09

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

POSITION **2/4**
TIME **0:03.23**

POSITION
TIME

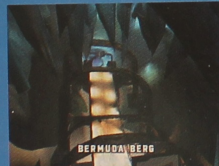
LAP **1/2**
When they say these sleds go like rockets, they ain't kidding. Unless he's just eaten a Tandoori that is...

TRACK LISTING

Sled Storm boasts some amazing leaps of faith. Here are our top five.



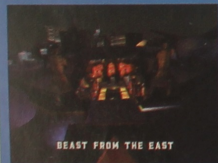
1. Cedar Canyon
A relatively easy intro to the world of Sled Storm and probably the most natural environment you'll race through.



2. Bermuda Berg
A track cut from glacial ice, the lack of friction is a big problem on turns. Save time with a short cut over a capsized liner.



3. Polarfest
This tricky course is set in a mad winter wonderland complete with haunted house, ferris wheel and big, big top finish line.



4. Beast From The East
Set in Hong Kong, this has plenty of opportunities for big air and sightseeing with some of jumps and short cuts.



5. Rumble Ridge
This Argentina-based volcanic odyssey comes with more short cuts per square metre than any other track.



6. Twinn Peaks
The peak of seat of the pants sled racing. Vertigo-inducing rises and drops, coupled with some very tricky short cuts.



7. Black Diamond
Bonus track with a deceptively sedate look that reveals itself to be riddled with vicious turns and undulating terrain.

SLED STORM

After the masterful SSX and even better SSX Tricky, EA BIG notches up yet another deliciously enjoyable extreme sports victory. The result? It can only be Insanity 4 - Reality 0.

Publisher: EA Sports 'BIG' Developer: EA Canada
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Before extreme really became EXTREME! EA released an enjoyable if unremarkable PSone Skidoo racer called Sled Storm, tethered to quaint old notions like realistic sled design. Now Sled Storm is reborn and it's an all-singing, all-dancing thrill fest. The game is closer to the SSX titles than its other 'BIG' brethren and it shows from the moment you fire the sucker up and a blast of nu-metal rattles the speakers.

Sled Storm gives you Single Race options of Quick Race, Time Trial and Free Ride, and a Championship mode through which you gain access to the six main (and one bonus) tracks, enhanced sleds and new riders. There's also multiplayer action and a novel Rival Challenge mode. The courses are designed with velocity, tricks and rule bending in mind (see Track Listing). Locations vary from the volcanic Rumble Ridge to the unhinged theme park setting of Polarfest and although there are only seven tracks to unlock, their design is such that you're unlikely to feel short changed - there are so many short cuts in the game.

However, with short cuts come risks and not all of them are worth the effort required to catch them just right. Indeed, when even the short cuts have short cuts, sorting out the wheat from the chaff can be a real challenge - it's a tough chore when you're astride Satan's own rocket-

powered hell wagon approaching terminal velocity midway round the Beast From The East.

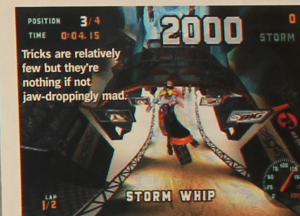
While trick-pulling is a feature here, unlike SSX Tricky it's not a big focus of the game. Tricks are confined to combination presses of the shoulder buttons and given the weight of sled versus board, you find out pretty quickly that one or two tricks per jump are the most you can expect to pull. But if the trick selection and opportunities aren't huge, the benefits of hitting track-side objects and can press **△** to trigger a scenery-blurring rocket boost that is so powerful in inexperienced hands it can prove to be as much of a handicap as it is a potential life saver.

But by far the most thrilling aspect of Sled Storm is the tuned gameplay challenge. This is a hard game. When you start you will part company with your sled a lot. Frustrating? You bet. However, even when it does happen you are never placed so far behind the pack that you can't regain the lead. As you get more experienced you'll wipe out far less often, but by then your opponents will be smarter, too. Handling is superbly sensitive and changing your sled's attitude midair is essential if you're going to land smoothly. This is a game where skill pays and the

Perfect balance in Sled Storm is an art in itself. Especially when a so-called 'friend' is trying to nudge you off.

There are loads of cool short cuts like this abandoned tanker on Bermuda Berg.

SLED STORM
REVIEW



//It's a tough chore when you're astride Satan's own rocket-powered hell wagon//

race environments are as challenging as your opponents. On the whole, the game's frame rate keeps pace with its own headlong ambitions. And animation, from clouds of exhaust-thrown slush to the riders getting buffeted by rough terrain, is executed well throughout. Add a frisk rock soundtrack and a pair of unhinged commentators and Sled Storm is everything we've come to expect from the 'BIG' label in terms of quality, style and sheer entertainment. Is it original? No. Is it a groundbreaking extreme sports evolution? Again, no. But it is one of the finest racing titles available on PS2 and worth inclusion in any fan's collection? Bingo. ■ Paul Fitzpatrick

SLED STORM

Why we'd buy it:
- We love speed.
- We want a powered racing cousin to SSX.

Why we'd leave it:
- We don't like the game being.
- We like pulling lots of tricks instead.

08

PlayStation 2 **NERDICT**

ARCTIC THUNDER

In Midway's latest arcade-fest there's 'snow' need to use your brakes... See what we did there?!



Publisher: Midway Developer: Midway/Inland Productions
Price: \$39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Arctic Thunder is just about the best fun you can have in the arcades right now. It's Midway racing in excelsis – ludicrous speeds, daft power-ups, sneaky short cuts and intense multiplayer action. Inland was handed the task of porting it to the PS2 and it's chosen to recreate the arcade experience frame for frame. Surely success is assured?

Except on first glance, Arctic Thunder looks a bit shoddy. Sure, all the courses you recognise are in there, but the animation is faltering and textures break up all over the place. We've been told countless times that the internal technology of PS2 is just as powerful as coin-op machines so visually, this has to go down as a huge disappointment.

Luckily, as soon as you start to play the game, graphical concerns can be put to the back of your mind.

Arctic Thunder moves so fast that you hardly notice the struggle to push polygons. Luridly-coloured power-ups litter the screen and in your struggle to greedily gather as many of them as possible, there's no time to admire the view.

With eight riders in each race, all firing snow bombs at each other simultaneously, things do get messy. This is one of those gloriously basic racers where scenery is there for you to smash through rather than to provide an obstacle to rapid progress. Brake? You won't even need to take your finger off the accelerator. This is not to say that Arctic Thunder is easy. Collecting the right power-up at the right time is crucial, as is shaving off vital tenths of a second by discovering a new short cut, or boosting on to a high ridge to access the devastating super attack. Furthermore, the AI riders are ruthless and any success is always earned.

There's more depth to Arctic Thunder than to most arcade conversions of its ilk. A total of 12 courses display commendable variety while an intelligent game structure

and a decent split-screen Multiplayer mode turn what would have been a game-to-rent into a game-to-buy. The vehicle upgrades seem superfluous but there are endless high score tables for you to conquer.

The rosey graphics in Arctic Thunder's PS2 incarnation suggest that your local games arcade needn't rebrand itself as a trendy wine bar just yet. Nevertheless, this is another winning package of instant coin-op thrills from the ever-reliable Midway coin-op stable. ■ Sam Richards

ARCTIC THUNDER

Why we'd buy it:
- Loads of great multiple-route courses
- Those sleds don't halt shift

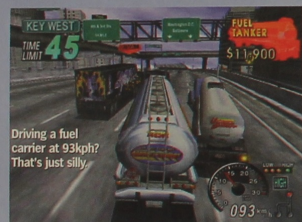
Why we'd leave it:
- Romy graphics
- Not quite as satisfying as the arcade game

07

PlayStation 2 VERDICT

18 WHEELER

You can take the game out of the arcade, but you can't take the arcade out of the game. Or something...



Publisher: Acclaim Developer: Sega/Acclaim Cheltenham
Price: \$39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

You could do this deal without a second thought back in the arcades. Offered Sega's shiny red cabinet with a massive steering wheel and crystal clear visuals, how could you possibly refuse? Up in the cab of your 18-wheeled steel beast, you felt like a bearded, Yorkie-eating god.

And now you can try and recapture that feeling by racing big trucks from the comfort of your own home. Perhaps racing isn't the right word though, because while you're fighting against the clock and a rival trucker, there's no real sensation of speed. Big trucks accelerate slowly, steer clumsily and struggle up even the shallowest incline.

Still, when you do get up to speed, your momentum means chaos – it's slo-mo destruction wrought by poor brakes, heavy steering and the inevitability of hitting passing cars.

Aside from the enjoyable two-player Versus game, there are three separate modes. The first is the straight arcade game which has you hauling different deliveries through four separate stages across America. The second, where bonuses are scored for crushing the right kind of car, sees your truck flying around one of four circuits in an attempt to beat its own record. The third is perhaps the strongest and involves you parking your truck against the clock. Odd that a racing game's finest moment is the bit where you try really hard to slow down. Somethings wrong.

The problem is that, although Sega design great arcade games (and 18 Wheeler is a great arcade game), that's exactly where something this insubstantial belongs: the

arcade. It needs the cabinet, the horn, the overstated presence. Even with the support of a steering wheel the PS2 version can't hope to match the arcade original. All the sensations are muted, there's no performing to the crowd and it's much, much too short. Trading a pound for ten minutes of show-off trucking is one thing. Buying it for forty quid is something else altogether. ■ Ste Curran

18 WHEELER

Why we'd buy it:
- Happy memories of the arcade cabinet
- Really big trucks

Why we'd leave it:
- Slow-paced for an arcade racer
- Lightweight gameplay

06

PlayStation 2 VERDICT



Playing with 'normal' handling, Moto GP 2 forgives small lapses of concentration. Like this.

MOTO GP 2

Namco's super slick two-wheel racing thriller returns with a mission to put the Aha! back into Yamaha.

Publisher: SCE Developer: Namco
Price: \$39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

The original Moto GP impressed racing fans with its sharp graphics, its attention to detail, and the realistic handling of the Simulation mode. Slick and superbly presented, Namco's newly evolved Moto GP 2 should have righted the few wrongs of the original, but despite boasting arguably one of the best racing dynamics on PS2, you can't help feeling that the developer has pulled up short once again.

At first glance, Moto GP 2 looks almost identical to its predecessor. It boasts the same Arcade, Season, Time Trial, Versus (which is disappointingly limited) and Challenge modes. And while the graphics have been improved, it's more of a makeover than plastic surgery. But thankfully, the sequel does address key criticisms, ie 'There aren't enough tracks', 'There aren't enough bikes', and 'For Foggy's sake, why can't I race in the wet?'

Arcade mode should be the first stop. Choose 'normal' handling (with automatic transmission) and things don't get much more complicated than accelerate, brake, lean left and lean right. Pre-game settings also allow you to



Not so much exciting bumper-to-bumper racing, but super-exhilarating back wheel-to-front wheel racing.

//Space can be tight as the procession of 500cc machines snakes around the track, gliding through sweeping bends//

tweak the performance of your chosen two-wheeler. You can adjust the gear ratio (increasing the bike's top speed but affecting the acceleration) or its handling (trading off response for stability). Acceleration, braking and tyre settings can also be bravely fiddled with, while extra bikes can be unlocked as you play.

Beyond the versatile Arcade mode, Moto GP 2 courts longevity with a further five areas of gameplay. The Season option, for example, challenges you to qualify and race against 20 other riders in a ten-track championship. While legend tests your racing prowess against – go on, guess – that's right – legendary bikers.

Out on the circuits the action is fast and intense, demanding constant concentration. Space can be tight as the procession of 500cc machines snakes around the track, gliding through sweeping bends, flicking left then right through tricky chicanes. Unless you learn the layout of

SO WHAT'S NEW?

A year on and Moto GP 2 features several new bits and pieces that make the racing experience that bit more realistic and detailed.



1. MORE TRACKS
The original Moto GP only featured five licensed tracks. Moto GP 2 adds five more (Catalunya, Assen, Le Mans, Mugello, Sachsenring).



2. MORE BIKES
An initial choice of bikes includes the Suzuki RGV4, Honda NSR500, Honda NSR500V and Yamaha YZR500. Proton KR3 and Pulse machines are also available, while extra powerful bikes can be unlocked with extended play.



3. WET RACING
One of the criticisms that has been levelled at Namco racers is that their landscapes are always nice and sunny. Moto GP 2 counters this charge with an excellent 'wet' option, affecting handling, vision and racing strategy.

the courses, knowing where to brake and when you won't be able to compete with the leaders. Arcade mode makes racing easier and more enjoyable for the novice, while the Simulation mode has a learning curve that you need a rope to climb – the bike squirms under full acceleration, flips out if you over-rev on a tight corner, or slips straight out from under you if you touch the grass during a turn. But that's what motorbikes are all about and, ultimately, this is a great no frills racing game. ■ Dean Evans

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MOTO GP 2

Why we'd buy it:
- A refining process
- Excellent 3D graphics
- Lovely neat replay facility

Why we'd leave it:
- A basic shallow multiplayer option
- Repetitive gameplay

07

PlayStation 2 VERDICT



This is what happens if you don't pay attention.



Performing stunts and stunt combos earns 'valuable' speed boosts.

AAH. FREAK OUT!

The ultimate speed boost is the Freak Out. Here's how it's done.



1. Build up your Freak Out meter by pulling tricks (The meter is the red bar on the bottom left of the screen).



2. When it's full, the Freestyle logo will start pulsating and a noise will indicate that you're ready to Freak Out.



3. Find a ramp (not always as easy as it sounds) and pull off the four-button Freak Out trick.



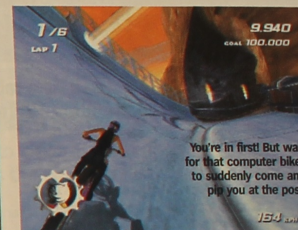
4. When you land, you have a period of motion-blurred zen and everything goes tunnel-shaped and dreamy. It won't always win you races but it does look very impressive.



Tricks are pulled by using combinations of the shoulder buttons.



Go on, we'll let you make your own 'ring of fire' joke.



You're in first! But wait for that computer biker to suddenly come and play you at the post.

FREEKSTYLE

A freekish design oversight sullies an otherwise stylish bout of motocross madness.

Publisher: EA Sports BIG Developer: Page 44
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

You can only hope that real-life motocross riders get more career satisfaction than we did when playing Freestyle. What looks from the exterior to be a thrilling, lightning-paced SSX on bikes is in fact a very troubled game. One that has the ability to inspire rage like no other and cause the invention of many new swear words. Believe us, if you can put 'ing' on the end of a word and then follow it with 'hell', it was uttered with biting venom while we were playing.

Check out the screenshots. Looks great doesn't it? Well hold that memory in your head and cherish it, because presentation is Freestyle's strongest point. The courses look suitably dirty (read 'gnarly'), the track locations have been imaginatively designed and the trick animations are smooth and distinctive. Racing is replete with plenty of that 'Ooh, that's quite cool factor, like when mud that's kicked up by spinning bike wheels sprays at the camera, or when players signal a particularly radical trick with a wave to the crowd.

Something else to be celebrated that can't be represented by the screens is the way the bike handles. Okay, we've never actually bailed off a motocross bike from 712 feet and landed teeth-first on a rock, but after feeling the way the Dual Shock 2's vibro function whirrs and thuds when you do it in-game, we've got a good idea. Similarly, the sensation given by different surfaces and how this affects speed and control is spot on, with worn, rutted parts of the courses causing a loss of grip and power.

But now we must put the boot in. In order to gain the upper hand on your opponents, speed boosts can be obtained by performing tricks and stunt combos. Without boosts, races can't be won and you won't progress or unlock new bikes or courses. Clearly, it takes a while for you to get good at tricks and in turn (you'd imagine) it takes a while before you start winning races. But, with the utmost frustration – and after your 20th go – you'll realise this isn't the case. You may be pulling all the best tricks and boosting yourself all around the track, but you'll still only manage to achieve fourth or fifth place.

Like rubbing petroleum-infected mud into an already stinging gash, Freestyle exacerbates your temper further by making you complete the same course three times, having to come third, third and first respectively. Consider that each track is very long (some take nine minutes to

complete) and made up of three laps, and you might understand how this can become a recurring nightmare very quickly – and where the inclination to swear profusely at the top of your voice arises.

It would also help if Freestyle didn't make you feel like the other riders were cheating – an unforgivable design flaw. It's soul-destroying when, after hours of coming last, carefully developing your trick skills and then suddenly finding yourself in first on the last straight, that a bike should come from nowhere and pip you on the line.

When you eventually do win, it's usually just by some fluke, or by discovering a short cut. By this stage you'll see Freestyle in a different light, the positive parts palling into insignificance. EA said it would never allow a substandard game to sully the BIG brand. It was lying.

■ George Walter

FREEKSTYLE

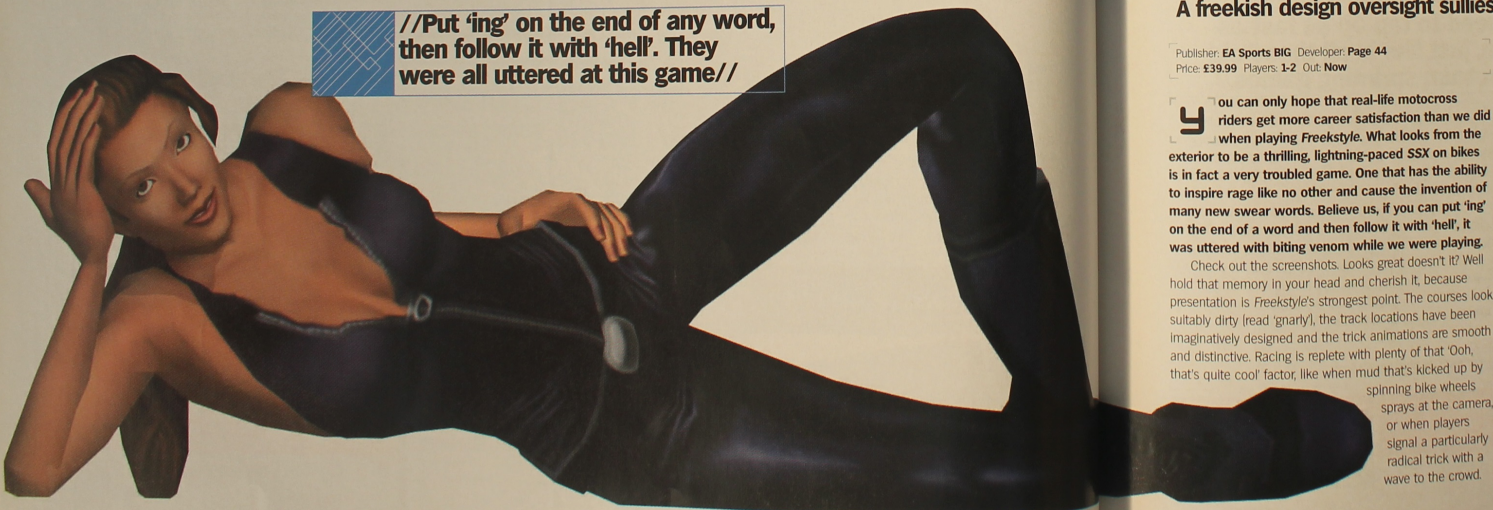
Why we'd buy it:
- EA was first
- It looks brilliant

Why we'd leave it:
- It's just not fair
- It makes you angry

06

PlayStation 2 VERDICT

//Put 'ing' on the end of any word, then follow it with 'hell'. They were all uttered at this game//





Ramming other cyclists is not encouraged. This isn't Road Rash, you know.

LE TOUR DE FRANCE

Every thrill and spill of push bike racing across 'gay Francais' recreated for your delectation. Hmm...

Publisher: Konami Developer: KCE OSA
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Outraged parents and Daily Mail readers have been banging on about the line between games and reality blurring dangerously for years now, and anyone in their right mind has ignored them. But wandering a submerged landscape and playing extreme sports with an amphibious youth (FFX) is one thing, as is pretending to be a mulleted secret agent with a penchant for grey bodystockings (MGS2). But cycling? You can't get more earthly than that. And anyone who'd forsake a pleasant bike ride in the country for its awkward virtual equivalent really should visit a doctor soon.

Let's face it, Le Tour has the cards stacked against it from the beginning. By their very nature, bikes lack the appeal of fast cars, and out of all this summer's major sporting tournaments, Le Tour De France is the least hyped in the UK. It's a shame, as Le Tour is arguably the toughest challenge in sport, and the game itself is genuinely innovative within the racing genre. Cars don't get tired, but the bloke who's dragging a few kilos of aluminium-on-wheels around the French countryside really suffers.

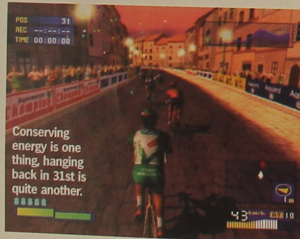
Hence, you can't win a race by maintaining top speed and hoping your brakes are up to the job on sudden corners, as you need to conserve energy for when it really

matters. A finite supply of water provides partial recovery should your stamina drop too low, but fail to manage it well and you'll grind to a halt, puffing and panting like a fat man rather than enthusiastically reading Playboy. Also key to being a successful Tourer is a fine understanding of your bicycle – you can't hurtle around a sharp corner at top speed, so instead you need to predict the braking distance several seconds before. Get it wrong and you'll hit the wall and tumble off, which raises your biker's damage meter and looks really stupid. If he takes too many knocks, he's out of the race.

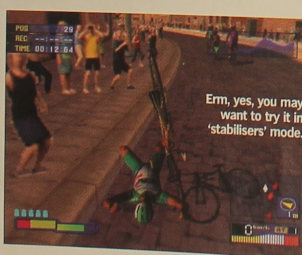
Despite these strange nuances, speed remains the major factor. Holding down **ⓧ** provides a steady rate of pedalling and doesn't use too much energy. You can also freewheel (best done

downhill as freewheeling uphill does not a winner make) to regain stamina, but when you really want to go for it, you need to tap **ⓧ** as fast as you can, just like in all those old ZX Spectrum sprinting games.

In all those old ZX Spectrum sprinting games, it's in the last few metres from the finish line that races are won or lost, as every biker suddenly goes full pelt after a hitherto relatively sedate contest, so you need to ensure you've got enough stamina left to support your last-ditch dash. It's an old-fashioned, somewhat clumsy, but strangely unique



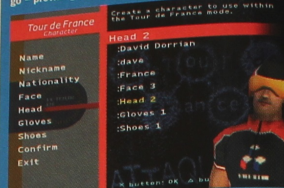
Conserving energy is one thing, hanging back in 31st is quite another.



Erm, yes, you may want to try it in 'stabilisers' mode.

I WANT TO RIDE MY BICYCLE

Play the game in Tour De France (Tournament) mode and you'll win money to upgrade your bike and biker as you go – providing you're good enough, that is.



1. You can customise your character at the start, although a paltry range of skins means he won't look much different from the rest of the herd.



2. Training your little bicycle racer can improve some of his abilities – although it'll leave him injured and less efficient for the next race.



3. If you're really swimming in cash, you can upgrade the bike itself. You start off with a clunker, but soon end up with a sleek fibreglass wonder.

//You need to tap **ⓧ** as fast as you can, just like in all those old ZX Spectrum sprinting games//

system and also a faithful recreation of real-world biking (apart from that fact that this game contains no exciting doping scandals of course). While it lacks the out-and-out coolness of your GTs and Burnouts, it does make for a tactical and challenging racer.

Unfortunately, there's nil points for presentation – options menus are an eyesore (check out I Want To Ride My Bicycle' above), in-game graphics are basic at best, and sound is confined to generic electro-beats and some pornographic panting. Le Tour De France is certainly a curio, but it's too rough around the edges to have any other than niche appeal. **Alec Meer**

LE TOUR DE FRANCE

Why we'd buy it:
- It's a unique tour
- The best bike, only PS2
- Bicycles race

Why we'd leave it:
- Low on adrenaline
- Graphically unexciting
- Limited courses

05

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

MX 2002

FEATURING RICKY CARMICHAEL

Offroad mud racing meets indoor supercross and freestyle trickery in THQ's challenging bike fest.

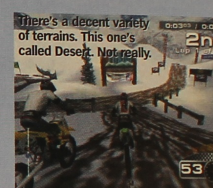


Not recommended if you plan on having children any time after landing.

Publisher: THQ Entertainment Developer: Pacific Coast Power and Light
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

You get the feeling there's a rush on to produce a franchise that does for bikes what Gran Turismo did for cars; i.e. make a shedload of cash every other year. Namco's had a bash with Moto GP 2 and now the latest hopeful is MX 2002, which can cut it with the four-wheel massive thanks to wicked speed, implausible stunts and three different styles of play: Motocross, racing round gruelling undulating tracks; Supercross, the same, but raced in huge indoor arenas; and Freestyle, the show off element, which is the riders' chance to wow the crowds with tricks.

To take part in both supercross and motocross competitions enter Exhibition mode. If you're more interested in the thrills of stunts, go for Freestyle. If you want the best of all three worlds then try the Career option which invites you to create your own rider, before easing you into the lower leagues with aspirations of mixing it with the big boys and gaining untold riches. Your career is played out over a racing calendar with a meeting every week to put your skills to the test. Only by finishing in the top three of each race can you progress to the next meet. Luckily, for those who find themselves lying in the mud more often than flying through the air, there's a tutorial to teach you some of the more cunning aspects of taming your motorised beast.



There's a decent variety of terrains. This one's called Desert. Not really.

At times though, MX 2002 can be frustrating. Your bike can cut through a muddy track with ease but stray onto grass and you'll go flying. Also, while cornering the bike seems to glide rather than skid. Most bizarrely, each time you hit the deck you're put back in the race at full speed, one position behind where you were before. While this keeps the pace constant, if MX 2002 is to be vaguely realistic it should ditch such arcadeisms. It's only because the rest of the game logic is so spot on that such inconsistencies stand out like a sore thumb. **Ryan Butt**

MX 2002 FEATURING RICKY CARMICHAEL

Why we'd buy it:
- Top speed
- Instantly accessible
- Challenging tracks

Why we'd leave it:
- Motocross games
- Fiddly control system
- You can't ride over grass

07

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

MX 2002 FEATURING RICKY CARMICHAEL/SPLASHDOWN



The dreary German river level features some bizarrely placed buildings.



The Maul level is a cracker with some huge jumps.



Water effects are totally convincing.

SPLASHDOWN

When it comes to water-based racers, it ain't what you do, it's the way you Sea-Doo it...

Publisher: Infogrames Developer: Rainbow Studios Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Woah! New gaming experience. It actually feels like your craft is buoyant. You bob up and down with the same dynamics as you would when floating in real life. The handling of this Sea-Doo-em-up is directly affected by waves and wake causing you to lose balance or speed and forcing you to adjust direction. This makes it necessary to 'work' the Sea-Doo round courses rather than simply apply gas and steer. This is Splashdown.

These fantastic water effect help disguise, at least for a while, gameplay that quickly becomes monotonous. Because a three lap qualification is necessary before each race (which is also three laps), you can often do the same track up to 12 times before progressing to a new location. And sadly, the courses are nothing to write home about.

Water doesn't make a game in itself – you need something to race through or around. Highlights include Maul and an Australian coral reef. In these locations, the whole experience adds up: clear blue sky, palm trees and that fluorescent aquamarine

sea that normally only exists in postcards of some exotic isle. The depth of the water is carefully considered, alternating between the sandy shallows and the darker and deeper areas where rocks and weeds lie. The fact the waves defy laws of science and roll at right angles to the shore is forgivable – you'll be too ensconced in the lushness of it all to care.

Compare this to a muddy and featureless German river in the rain and you'll see where the designers' imaginations ran dry. When there is no sense of depth to the water the effect is somewhat diluted and the game loses impact. It rapidly becomes a case of accelerate, slow down, jump a ramp, land, finish. The buildings, trees, docks and boats you pass appear to have just been randomly dumped there by a bored town planner.

Splashdown, lacking the imaginative excesses of, say, SSX offers little more than a racing game on water. While never less than enjoyable, there are no original elements here to make the game a roaring deluge rather than just a slightly dangerous stream. **George Walter**

SPLASHDOWN

Why we'd buy it:
- To experience the water
- It's the PS2's best water-based racer

Why we'd leave it:
- Uninspiring gaming
- Monotonous tracks
- Odd AI

07

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

Tiny cars, 'crazy' characters 'wacky' weapons. Yes, it's the genre every developer turns to when they have a lucrative film/TV tie-in to make!

P 106 THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE

Homer, Bart and co. do *Crazy Taxi* in the latest, possibly greatest videogame outing for the Simpsons franchise.

P 107 WACKY RACES

Wacky karting action with the cast of Hanna Barbera's classic motoring madness cartoon.

P 108 STAR WARS: SUPER BOMBAD RACING

Familiar Star Wars characters as you've never seen them before. I.e. miniaturised and racing diddy hovercraft!

P 109 SPACE RACE

More cartoon karting, this time with Looney Tunes legends Daffy Duck, Bugs Bunny, Elmer Fudd and co.

P 109 LEGO RACERS 2

Build your kart then race it in this videogame outing for the popular Danish export. No, the other one.

1:25

KART RACERS



Monty Burns' buyout of Springfield Transit Corporation prompts you to aid local folk about.

THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE

'Crazy' driving with Homer, Bart and the other Springfield regulars.



The clock's ticking away as Groundskeeper Willy struggles to destroy enough newspaper boxes.



A helpful finger, glowing rings... Is this where we say 'It's bloody Crazy Taxi'!? Yes it is.

Publisher: EA Developer: Radical Entertainment
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Okay, let's get it out of the way. *Road Rage*, for all intents and purposes, is *Crazy Taxi*. You hurtle around cartoon 3D environments earning a living as a cabbie in a fashion that's nigh on inseparable from the classic Sega title. From the top-of-screen hand icon pointing you in the right direction to the luminous rings highlighting potential fares, the game's a barefaced rip-off.

So zero for originality, EA. But with characters from one of the finest TV show ever – ably complemented by a fine idea for a game under the bonnet – *The Simpsons: Road Rage* turns out to be a frantic and often amusing slice of arcade fun. At the very least, it's an enormous improvement on PSone's deplorably cynical cash-in *The Simpsons Wrestling*.

Road Rage mode is the main body of the game. Here you select your favourite character from the likes of Homer, Apu, Barney and Krusty the clown, then speed through the various districts of Springfield picking up fares and taking passengers to their desired destination within a set time. Rack up enough cash and you gain a reward: either one of the six different starting locations or a new driver and vehicle. Reverend Lovejoy's Book Burning mobile, even if it does handle like a carthorse, stands out as one of the funniest in the entire Springfield line-up.

Boistering the main game is a lively Mission mode, which gives you 20 different tasks to complete (mainly involving the trashing of public and private property). The two-player mode is great, too. The aim here is to be the first to earn a big fat wad of dough by initially fighting it out

MAN ABOUT TOWN

Homer's grand tour of Springfield.



1. As you burn through the mean streets of Springfield, you'll see a collection of familiar landmarks, but now in glorious 3D. Ever wondered how to get from the Simpsons' home to the Kwik-E-Mart? Through a plate glass window, of course.



2. Ah, has there ever been a higher seat of learning than Springfield Elementary school? Well, yes, actually. Whizz through the main corridor and you'll find Groundskeeper Willy's hut. Make the fiery Scot's day by ploughing right through it. Ochi!



3. Passing over the Springfield dam, scene of many a famous encounter. Bad driving can pitch you into the drink and lose you valuable time here. Fortunately, Mr Plow can use his four-wheel drive to scale the face of the dam. What's my name? It's Mr Plow!

to pick up a fare, then making a dash for the destination without having the other player pinch your ride by smashing into you. *Simpsons* aficionados will love the face off between 'Plow King' and 'Mr Plow'.

While the front end is all very nice, for a game where speed is the key, the length of time it takes to load a level and get on the road is enough to tax the diddly patience of even Ned Flanders. The lack of a quick replay option is also particularly frustrating.

Get the green light and every passenger indulges in small talk when you first pick them up. Ralph Wiggum chatting about eating his earwax can't help but raise a smirk, but there are only so many times you can listen to Homer chanting 'USA! USA!' before you feel compelled to ram his supply of doughnuts right up his shiny yellow butt.

But when all's said and done, all you're really left with is a *Crazy Taxi* for *Simpsons* fans. It's good, it's fun, but it's also verging on the litigious. And that laughing sound you hear? That's Matt Groening quietly chuckling as he counts his royalties in the back seat. **■ Nick Ellis**

THE SIMPSONS: ROAD RAGE

Why we'd buy it:
- Top two-player mode
- To play as your favourite Simpsons characters

Why we'd leave it:
- Too similar to *Crazy Taxi* to offer any new gameplay diamonds

06

PlayStation 2 VERDICT

WACKY RACES

STARRING DASTARDLY AND MUTLEY

Nostalgic cartoon racing with more hidden weapons than Iraq.



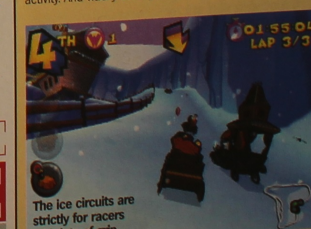
Wacky drivers pick up wacky tokens to power up wacky weapons to fire at wacky rivals. It's just so wacky!

Publisher: Infogrames Developer: Infogrames
Price: £39.99 Players: 1-4 Out: Now

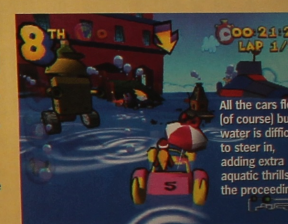
Usually at least, Infogrames has done a very good job of approximating the crazy, brash cartoon world of *Wacky Races*. Just look at the expressionistic use of colour and shape. Clouds are blank white fluff, houses, trees and even the vehicles themselves are twisted and distorted impressions of what houses and trees and cars would look like on mind-altering chemicals. It looks ace.

The epic game structure is impressive too. Arcade mode offers the usual single race and time trial options, but the main Adventure mode has you competing in a huge number of challenges all split into various themes, and then split again into different races and sub-challenges. For each race you win there's a gold star and as you collect more, they open up new areas and new challenges.

The circuits are mostly well-imagined and filled with great cartoon detail. The surreal, desolate desert landscapes of *Wacky Races* have been replicated perfectly, but the designers have added other themed environments based around snow, forests and a wobbly cartoon city to name but a few. There are drawbridges, stomach-churning spirals, ramps, over-passes, under-passes, chicanes, hidden passages, alternative routes – the screen is crammed with activity. And Wacky activity at that.



The ice circuits are strictly for racers with lots of grip.



All the cars float (of course) but water is difficult to steer in, adding extra aquatic thrills to the proceedings.

But *Wacky Races* doesn't play well at all. When you have eight cars on screen, all throwing weapons at each other, skill can often become less important than luck – and this is the deadly sin of videogame design. Similarly, the track design has just too many chinks in it, designed to catch out drivers. Lamp posts, flag poles, gates and fences all protrude into the racing line ready to stop any car dead in its tracks.

These things in moderation are acceptable, but every track is filled to the brim with traps and power-ups, so if you're not driving straight into a previously unseen post, you're being knocked into it by a blast from out of nowhere. The track layout can also be desperately confusing with arrows that do little more than point aimlessly in the vague direction you're supposed to be heading in.

Wacky Races is a decent game which makes a real effort to capture the spirit of the cult cartoon. There's also a massive challenge here and uncovering all the areas of the Adventure mode will take a few weeks and test your knowledge of each circuit's secret routes to the max. However, the arbitrary nature of each race, together with the basic handling, means that many gamers will lose interest a long way before the end. Not exactly Dastardly then, but certainly a long way behind Peter Perfect. **■ Keith Stuart**

WACKY RACES

Why we'd buy it:
- Great cartoon visuals
- Plenty of long-term challenges

Why we'd leave it:
- Lack of game balance
- Makes a wacky factor

06

PlayStation 2 VERDICT



STAR WARS: SUPER BOMBAD RACING

A long time ago in a galaxy far, far away, diddy Star Wars characters had some hovercar races. Sheesh...



"Ah, explosion it is. Hmm, Obi-Wan, strong must be the force in your pikey mullet..."



"Maul will have his revenge for the stupid little head you mock him with!"



Coruscant is easily the best track thanks to a great blend of speedy downhill and jumps.

Publisher: Activision Developer: Lucas Learning
Price: \$39.99 Players: 1-4 Out: Now

Darth Maul is no longer a fearsome Jedi, consumed by the Dark Side, striking terror into enemies with his stripey face and double lightsabre. No sir, now he's a midget with a massive head mucking about in a hovercar and shaking his mini fists at careless drivers. Next, look out for Amie's Terminator shooting bubbles with his Uzi 9mm in Bust-A-Move: I'll Be Back. It's just so scarily plausible.

The reason for Darth Maul's humiliating descent into Infant-friendly cuddliness is Super Bombad Racing, which takes the tried and trusted Mario Kart formula and plonks it slap bang in the Star Wars universe. In other words, you get familiar faces (Anakin, Obi-Wan, Yoda) racing around familiar locations (Naboo, Mos Espa, Coruscant) and using various power-ups to help them finish first.

The gameplay will be instantly familiar to anyone who has ever played a comedy karting game. It's fast, it's furious and the crafty use of weapons and speed boosts is just as important as racing ability. The course designs are fairly impressive with numerous alternate routes and shortcuts providing a welcome tactical edge to the races.

Unfortunately, while skill may be involved in negotiating the tracks and selecting preferred routes, whether you end up finishing first or eighth is rather more down to luck than judgement. Say, for instance, you race around the Naboo Swamp, speed into pole position and stay there all the way for a comfortable victory. Race the same track again and you might just as easily finish a lowly sixth, through no fault of your own but merely because some random factor decided to throw every single weapon at your vehicle and have the opposition use you as a battering ram.

Admittedly, this unpredictability is a big part of the charm of kart racers but where Mario Kart achieved the perfect balance between fun and frustration, Super Bombad Racing gets it all wrong. When a computer racer

DEATH STARS

Had enough of racing? Then dish out some death.



The Arena mode allows up to four players to turn to the Dark Side and inflict a bit of the old ultraviolence on each other. Side and inflict a bit of the old ultraviolence on each other. Using the power-ups scattered around the environments, it's a case of blasting everyone that isn't you and last man standing is the winner.



There are four arenas to choose from - including the Great Pit of Carkoon with its Sarlac Pit ready to digest you - and they're so big that single-player battles can be a touch dull with a lack of pick-ups and enemy sightings few and far between. However, multiplayer deathmatches are just the job thanks to the constant, vindictive threat from so-called friends.

smacks into your vehicle its big spin, big slow down time while the aggressor speeds off into the distance. Attempt a bit of revenge by doing the same to them and guess what happens? That's right, you're sent into a spin and the opponent carries on as if nothing has happened. Considering that tussles between vehicles is the main appeal of karting games, the fact that Super Bombad Racing weighs the balance firmly in favour of CPU drivers renders the single-player game virtually redundant.

Thankfully, the multiplayer options are a different story altogether. As with any kart game worth its salt, Bombad is a much more attractive proposition when you get a few

//It's fast, it's furious and the crafty use of weapons is just as important as racing ability//

mates involved. Up to four of you can take part and on an even playing field with a healthy dose of despicable human deviousness, the game bursts into a semblance of life. There is a disappointing drop in frame rate with four players on screen, but the ultra-competitive nature of the races more than makes up for this.

Despite the appeal of its multiplayer modes, it's hard to see where Super Bombad Racing is going to find an audience. Hardcore Star Wars fans are unlikely to be amused by super-deformed caricatures of their heroes, while karting fans will soon rumble the game as a wholly derivative Mario Kart clone that brings nothing new to the sub-genre. Mouldy old Yoda summed it up best with: "Hmm, average game this is."

Lee Hart

STAR WARS: SUPER BOMBAD RACING

Why we'd buy it:
- Excellent track designs and power-ups
- Extremely fast

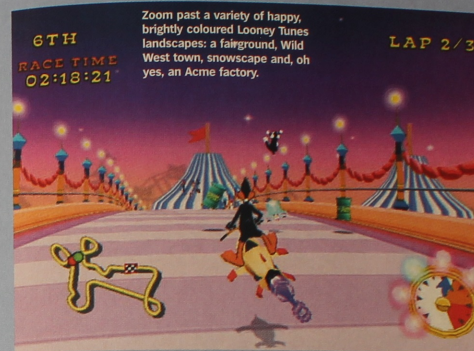
Why we'd leave it:
- Unfair, unbalanced single-player game

05

PlayStation 2 NERDICT

SPACE RACE

It's Mario Kart meets The Jetsons in WB land...



Publisher: Infogrames Developer: Melbourne House Price: \$44.99 Players: 1-4 Out: Now

Ah, those old Warner Bros cartoons... Wile E Coyote chasing Roadrunner, Bugs Bunny outwitting the 'wabbit'-hunting Elmer Fudd. Forget Rugrats, Pokémon and The Powerpuff Girls, Bugs and co hail from a golden age of animation that was designed to be colourful, noisy, wildly violent and fun for five minutes. It's unfortunate that Space Race, which thrusts the classic WB characters into a futuristic game of Mario Kart, sticks too closely to this formula.

Space Race represents the racing genre in its simplest form. It involves guiding familiar characters around 12 ludicrous tracks, all littered with opponent-delaying power-ups. As a result, no knowledge of 'racing lines' is required and you don't need to master any deft overtaking manoeuvres. Instead, with the accelerator firmly and almost constantly depressed, victory can be achieved with the help

of regularly launched homing missiles, fizzing bombs and the odd pink elephant sent plummeting from the sky.

Featuring several cartoon icons - Daffy, Bugs, Wile E Coyote, Yosemite Sam, Elmer Fudd, etc - each character pilots its own hover scooter or rocket. The main game options enable one-off races, multiplayer and time-trial play on a variety of brightly coloured sci-fi circuits. And let's not forget the Tournament mode. Win the mini competitions here and you can earn special Acme tokens that you can use to unlock secret characters, animations and movies.

Sadly, no matter which cartoon legend you pick, there's no difference in your vehicle's handling or acceleration. There's also no real sense of speed, although collecting five turbo charges gives you the ability to hurtle recklessly for a few joyous seconds. What's most frustrating, however, is that Space Race appears to reward luck rather than skill. While you can barge your way into first place by dropping portable holes or KO'ing competitors with spring-firing boxing gloves, these vital power-ups appear at random. When all opponents begin firing with abandon, it's possible to go from fifth to first and back to fifth again in the space of a few cel-shaded metres without really knowing why.

Despite the familiar faces, despite the comedy boings, crashes and whizzes, there is nothing original or inventive about Space Race. It's clever and pretty to look at, but vacuous and unsatisfying at the same time. And that's all folks! ■ Dean Evans

Any second a 'hilarious' weapon could knock you into last place.

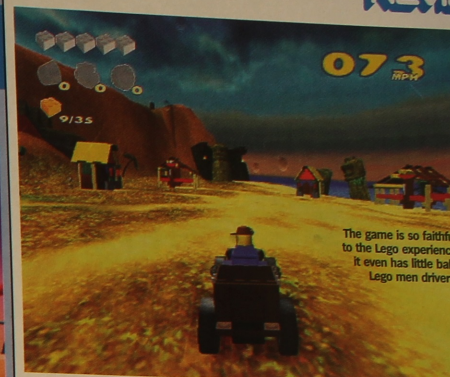
SPACE RACE

Why we'd buy it:
- For frantic cartoon racing thrills
- Run range of weapons

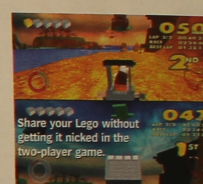
Why we'd leave it:
- Poor Mario Kart rip-off
- Lacks originality
- No real sense of speed

05

PlayStation 2 NERDICT



It's the first PS2 game with intentionally blocky graphics!



Share your Lego without getting it nicked in the two-player game.

LEGO RACERS 2

You'll drive so fast, you'll be bricking it...

Publisher: Video System Developer: Ubi Soft
Price: \$39.99 Players: 1-2 Out: Now

Lego's dead clever really. It's right simple, but at the same time complex creations can be fashioned from its little plastic blocks. Which is precisely why it's endured all these years, despite the advanced computer technology at kids' fingertips today. But such is the lure of videogames that even Lego wants in on the action and after a previous outing on PSone, here's our first taste of Lego racing, PS2 style.

As you can imagine, this isn't very complicated. It's basic arcade racing [with Mario Kart-style power-ups, naturally] in angular plastic vehicles. These come in all shapes and sizes, from buggies and police cars to hovering spacecraft. The handling of each is best suited to a particular terrain, and these include a dinosaur infested atoll, the Arctic and the surface of Mars. The inevitable Adventure mode provides a more structured approach than the Arcade option requiring you to unlock new areas by winning races and collecting golden bricks.



Time-trial and Multiplayer modes [with leagues and battles available] add extra longevity and the entertaining Car Construction mode [where you - that's right - build your own car!] is the game's best feature - great for reminiscing over youth's lost pleasures.

Obviously this is a title aimed squarely at the younger end of the market, but Lego Racers 2 is still better than some pitiful race offerings of late. We doubt you'll be interested if you haven't got any children or are older than ten, but it's entertaining enough to want to sit down and play it for an evening with the sprogs of the family.

Adrian Lawton

LEGO RACERS 2

Why we'd buy it:
- Car Construction mode

Why we'd leave it:
- Not much to write home about

05

PlayStation 2 NERDICT



RUBBISH RACERS

For every gleaming racing game dream machine there are ten burnt out bangers dumped on the grass verge of the dual carriageway to nowhere. Let's investigate the auto carnage that is, The Crag Racer.

PENNY RACERS



Gran Turismo, but cute? Nice idea. Pity about the game.

Publisher: Midas Developer: Takara

With its garage, tuning and driving license features, mixed up with comic, super-deformed cars, Penny Racers really wants to be a petite, fun GT3. It fails. The tracks are a curious mix of the very bland, and less commonly, the rather pretty. Some feature stretches of water, or yawning chasms, which your car reacts to by transforming itself into a boat or a glider. Yet a good 50 percent are dull ovals, with few features or challenges. This patchiness is Penny Racers' downfall. It tries hard to be novel and exciting, but for too much of the game you'll be wondering why you're bothering. Best advice? Don't.

4/10 Official PlayStation 2 Magazine #14

SUPERCAR STREET CHALLENGE

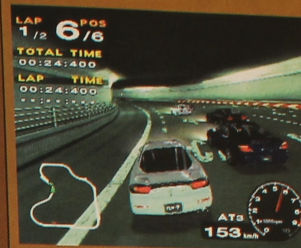


Fast cars, glamorous cities, empty roads, average game...

Publisher: Activision Developer: Exakt

Admittedly, this game does everything reasonably well. It offers the usual selection of play modes and it features competently designed city circuits. The thing is, there's no original detail. The only vague novelty is the choice of vehicles. Instead of Nissans, Ferraris and Subarus, we get Rinspeeds and Saleens. We don't what the hell these cars are but they look like flat and featureless slabs of Plasticine. In fact, the whole game has had any semblance of life knocked out of it. It's an amalgam of washed out ideas – the videogame equivalent of a made for TV thriller starring Corbin Bernsen and Victoria Principal.

4/10 Official PlayStation 2 Magazine #14



DRIVING EMOTION TYPE-S

Square makes an ill-advised foray into the racing genre.

Publisher: EA Developer: Square

The emotion Square (famous for previous driving games such as Final Fantasy) is referring to in the title of this game is agonised frustration. Although on the face of it this is a standard racer with collectable cars and varied circuits, it is, in fact, some kind of bizarre dadaist subversion: the handling model requires constant shifts in direction, even when you're driving down a straight; then there's the motion blurring, which is so blurry, it's like you've smeared Vasoline all over your TV screen. Square, stick to RPGs. Please.

4/10 Official PlayStation 2 Magazine #5

MIDNIGHT CLUB



Fed up with following The Highway Code? Join the Club.

Publisher: Rockstar Developer: Angel Studios

Yes, it's another one of those illegal street race games, where gangs in souped-up production cars challenge each other to dangerous nocturnal speed-fests. However, just like Tokyo Street Racer, this falls way short of capturing the anarchic thrill of turning innocent roads into humming death circuits. The street scenery is so bland and blocky it's like driving round a particularly poor architectural sketch, while the extravagant lighting and lens flare effects make you feel as you're taking a leading role in someone else's psychotic acid trip. One day a good game will be made about boy racers. This isn't it.

4/10 Official PlayStation 2 Magazine #1



DRIVEN

Stallone in 'failure to bring credibility to film tie-in' shocker.

Publisher: BAM! Entertainment Developer: BAM! Studios

It's a well-known fact that good movies often spawn poor videogames. It's probably not much of an achievement, then, that a bad movie about American CART racing, penned by none other than *Stop! Or My Mom Will Shoot* legend Sly Stallone, now has an equally bad videogame to its name. Add in Stallone's corny cut-scene voiceovers and it's often plain embarrassing. The driving isn't any better. Bizarre AI means you're regularly smashed off the track from behind, while other cars negotiate hairpins without so much as touching the brake. If you try the same trick you go into an uncontrollable spin.

Occasionally, the success of a film means a poor license sells well regardless. That's unlikely to happen here: Driven the movie came out last October and sunk like a metal turd down the boghole of life. The game will follow it.

4/10 Official PlayStation 2 Magazine #15

SUPER TRUCKS



Lots of trucks, but we're not sure where the super ones are.

Publisher: Jester Interactive Developer: Jester Interactive

Of course, what Jester should have done was capture all the OTT stupidity of truck racing – a sports concept only marginally less ludicrous than dwarf tossing. Instead, the developer has produced a limp, straight-faced driving sim which treats these super powered behemoths like slightly bigger sports cars, complete with the sort of wimpy, soggy handling you might usually associate with a Datsun Cherry. Why was there no Convoy mode, in which players take on the role of Kris Kristofferson in the 1978 truckin' flick? And why, oh why is there no Ivan 'Ironman' Stewart license? Even those who actually DO watch Eurosport's Super Truck racing coverage without chuckling will be disappointed by this.

4/10 Official PlayStation 2 Magazine #20



TOKYO EXTREME RACER

It's about as 'Extreme' as International indoor bowls...

Publisher: Crane/UBI Soft Developer: Genki

There really ought to be something exciting about illegally racing along the nocturnal highways of Tokyo, challenging other rude boys to highspeed face-offs. Strangely though, the experience is almost as empty as the serene night-time roads on which Genki's game takes place. It's the structure that really galls. You drive around aimlessly for a while, then flash your headlights at some chump in a souped up Honda. It's racing time! So for 30-90 seconds you drive a bit faster trying to stay ahead of your foe as his energy bar depletes. In a sort of automotive take on the beat-'em-up. The winner gets some cash to spend on upgrades, then its back on the road once more, looking for trouble. You could achieve the same lifestyle for real by removing three quarters of your brain, buying a Toyota Celica and moving to Dagenham.

4/10 Official PlayStation 2 Magazine #11



THE FLINTSTONES IN VIVA ROCK VEGAS

Yabba dabba doo? Yabba dabba don't, more like...

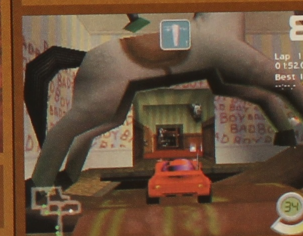
Publisher: Acclaim Developer: Acclaim Studios Cheltenham

Whenever any games firm gets hold of a particularly poor license – or, perhaps, has milked an existing license until its teats have turned blue – they all do the same thing: slap it atop some half-arsed karting game with 'hilarious' weapons. It may be no surprise, therefore, to find that this is the case with Viva Rock Vegas.

In a prequel to the cartoon, Fred wants to win the heart of his beloved Wilma and marry the prehistoric ginger ASAR. Alas, he must first win the Boulderball Run kart race. And so we get stone-age karting action against 12 Flintstones characters. And, inevitably, it's all horribly awful. Not a drop of care has been invested in this game and the end result is as soulless and pointless as the film itself. Even the voice-overs are the weary drawls of five-penny actors who'd probably much rather be filming a butter commercial.

2/10 Official PlayStation 2 Magazine #11

RC REVENGE PRO



The batteries have gone flat on this remote-controlled travesty.

Publisher: Swing! Entertainment Developer: Tola

Like Penny Racers this rushed remote control car driving game sets out to prove, once and for all, that small isn't necessarily cute or fun. Loosely set in a theme park you get to drive all manner of dippy vehicles around oversized courses. Unfortunately, the cartoon-style scenery is so simple it's an insult to PS2. Sony might well have grounds to sue for defamation of hardware. Gameplay-wise, like all those rotten karting games that spawned out in the wake of Super Mario Kart, there's just no balance. Once you've picked up a couple of weapons you can go from 8th to 1st in a matter of seconds, removing any sense of skill from the proceedings. Surely, this must be the bitter end of Acclaim's pointless RC franchise?

3/10 Official PlayStation 2 Magazine #2



JET ION GP

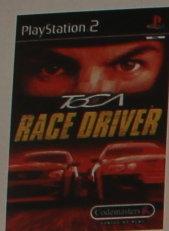
Wanted: For crimes against racing games.

Publisher: Ubi Soft Developer: Crane Entertainment

For a second imagine WipeOut Fusion with every redeemable feature sucked from it, so that all you're left with is a kind of putrid, white, wobbly lump of silicon. Congratulations. You are now picturing Jet Ion GP, a WipeOut clone of quite staggering incompetence. Some may be able to forgive the jerky graphics, the scenery that staggers past like an incontinent person, others may overlook the poor collision detection which, in all honesty, couldn't detect a collision between a thirty billion ton asteroid and a large planet. However, no-one in their right mind could forgive the fact that you don't have to actually steer the spindly jet craft – they're quite happy bobbing along by themselves, occasionally rebounding off the walls and changing direction like some kind of inane Alton Towers kiddie ride. This is so bad it's almost a work of genius.

1/10 Official PlayStation 2 Magazine #21

TO BUY ALL OF THESE GAMES WOULD COST AROUND £240



TOCA RACE DRIVER



CONFLICT:
DESERT STORM



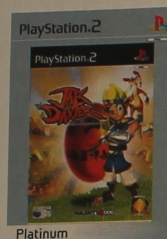
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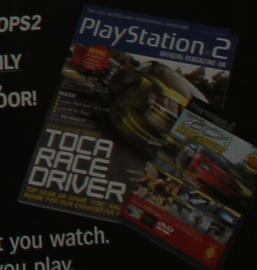
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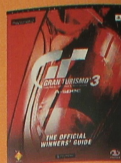
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GETTING STARTED



6-26 MINUTES **NAILING THE CORNERS**

This is the first technique you need to master, as races are won or lost around G73's twists and turns. The rule is the brake as late as possible for extreme lefts or rights (even on the secret Professional Difficulty setting – accessed by holding down **Ⓜ** and **Ⓝ**) on the Hard setting – the CPU drivers brake comically early for corners) and be aggressive with the inside line.

Again, head for Trial Mountain and the Castrol Supra and on the sweeping bend that leads into the first tunnel, sector, go on the left-hand side. You'll notice the black marker brake lights flicker much earlier than you'd expect, and you can simply muscle the leaders towards the outside of the bend. This high speed/dogme-style smack up is an essential technique to master for the Honda Supra. Once you open up Tokyo R246 and its first right-hand bend, you'll see the Honda Supra's true foray into punishing right-hand corners just before you feel the sun on your face! – accelerate at top speed into it, making sure you're on the inside, and clutter the opponents out of the way. We guarantee you'll scream into first place after two or three attempts. Obviously, if the cars actually took damage, you'd probably have to resort to finding the racing line.

Also, don't be afraid to cut the odd corner. Cheating? Probably, but if you want to get ahead, get a hat... or something. For instance, as you approach the final two bends before the start/finish straight on Trial Mountain, you can afford to cut across the grass just behind the traffic light. You should also try this technique on Mid-Field Raceway - you can afford to be a bit 'loose' with your racing line on the first right-hand corner and there are several other dust-scurfing opportunities along its length. As well as on every other track.

- Get on the inside where possible.
- Feather the brakes and throttle.
- Be aggressive.

0-6 MINUTES

The GT Force wheel, although its superb and takes the GT3 experience to new heights if you have one, isn't an essential piece of kit. We've clocked up some serious times using a humble Dual Shock 2 and this is where we suggest you learn your craft.

First up, ignore the default settings – head to the options screen and swap the settings for Brakes and Change View (so you'll be braking with **Q** and changing your view with **B**). Now select Arcade mode and check out on Trail Mountain – a good test for honing your braking skills – selecting Normal, S Class, Control Super, Automatic, Racing (don't bother with Drift while you're initially getting to grips with the game). This car combines good acceleration with responsive handling and it'll give you a rewarding test experience. As you get used to the time getting used to the new controller set, it feels like you're going to spend more time getting used to the new controller set. If you're a bit of a beginner, you're bound to forget that you've changed the configuration for the first few runs, but the ability to feather the brakes with your finger while accelerating with your thumb is the perfect way to play the game.

Also, always go for the in-car view – you'll find yourself over-correcting your steering a little too much when you're racing with the external camera. It's also the closest you'll get to a realistic driving experience and it looks so much faster when you're behind the wheel.



26-42 MINUTES FINDING THE RACING LINE

The CPU cars all follow the racing line nose-to-tail like a family of shrews. In theory this will give you the quickest route through a course (although, as you'll find, this isn't always true). However, when you get a true muscle car which has awesome acceleration you only rarely need to try slipstreaming on the earlier courses.

Choose Team ORECA's Viper and head out on Super Speedway. You'll notice your competitors peel off to the right-hand side of the track at the start, trying to gain a slipstream advantage. Ignore 'em and belt it straight ahead towards the first sweeping left-hander. Staying on the inside, you'll come out onto the next straight in the top three. Racing line, schmaying line... However, you'll find you need to stick to it more on the advanced tracks, Seattle Circuit for instance, or you'll come a serious cropper before the first lap is over.

- Look for the tyre marks – they're your guide.
- When approaching corners, think about the easiest way in and out of the apex – this will be the line that requires the least amount of change in your trajectory. The ideal way is to approach a corner from the outside (the far right on a left-hand bend), then at the apex pull sharply in, accelerating towards the inside of the corner and out onto the outside of the following straight. We know in a racing situation this doesn't always make for the best position though.
- Watch the CPU cars if you're finding some sections tricky.

65-85 MINUTES

MASTERING THE FISHTAIL

Okay, time to tackle a rally stage. These are actually straightforward and once you unlock the 4WD majesty of the Delta HF Integrale you'll be returning to the rally courses to shave off a staggering amount of seconds from your previous lap times. To get to grips with rallying though, select a light 4WD all-rounder like the Peugeot 206 or the Ford Focus. Head for Smokey Mountain [Swiss Alps is far too dark to be able to see what's going on] and practice taking those bends without braking. Try this:

1. As you approach a tight right-hander, take your thumb off accelerator.
 2. Nudge the analogue stick to the right.
 3. With the steering to the right, hit accelerate. You'll find the back end swinging around, taking you round the corner.
 4. Your front end will still be facing towards the inside of the bend while your back end keeps swinging around – to correct this, take your thumb off accelerate again, nudge the steering to the left, and hit accelerate again. Your car should straighten up.
- Try this process slowly to start with, until you feel comfortable. It shouldn't take long and you'll soon find you can judge how long to keep your finger off accelerate and how far to nudge the analogue stick to correct your powerslide.



Points to remember:

- Points to remember:**
- Be light with your steering – repeated small nudges are generally more effective in correcting your car than massive turns.
 - Use your brakes on a transition from Tarmac to gravel. If you find you haven't taken a wide enough arc into the corner.
 - Dip the brakes if you're going into a seriously sharp bend (like those you'll encounter towards the start of Tahiti Maze later in the game), which gives you a tighter powerslide. Hit **W** as you take your finger off accelerate and shove the steering wheel in the direction of the bend for the first time.

GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC

42-50 MINUTES LEARNING HOW TO SLIPSTREAM

We've already mentioned slipstreaming – you'll see the CPU cars do this at the start of every race. It's a technique that you'll become intimate with if you're planning on keeping up with the pack on the Test Course. Until you unlock this, try practising on another straight course (corners will leap out at you from behind the car, blocking your view if you try this on a more demanding track).

Try it out on Super Speedway (go for it on Hard difficulty – giving you more laps to catch up with the pack). Simply line yourself up behind the car in front and, if you're close enough, you'll find you accelerate more effectively right up to their bumper, and you can duck out and overtake when the opportunity arises. It's a simple technique, and is ideal for those dodgy

simple technique, and is ideal for those glorious last minute dashes to the finish line.

- On Test Course, don't be fooled into thinking the top-specification car is the right one - you'll still have to rely on slipstreaming.
- Wily opponents will sway across the road, trying to free you from their tail.
- Slipstream until you can smell the rubber on the finishing line - the acceleration advantage gained from this style of close driving is short-lived.

**50-65 MINUTES** PICKING THE BEST CARS

Erm, sounds obvious, right? But because of the variety of courses on offer, you'll find some cars are more suited to particular course than others – it's not just a matter of picking the fastest car and expecting to unlock every track so take a bit of time trying out the basic motors on offer. We'd recommend heading for the S Class vehicles to start with, as the cars in the less powerful classes just don't deliver as many thrills, and you can always come back to them once you've unlocked all the tracks in Arcade, just to be a completist.

We recommend the following:

Viper GTS R – a grunty all-rounder perfectly suited to those courses which combine long straights with testing bends (such as Seattle Circuit).



Castrol Supra – good for tight, twisty tracks like Trial Mountain.

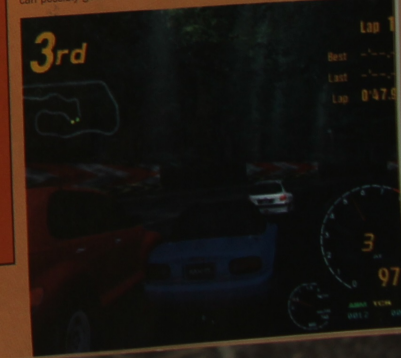


Arta NSX – try this on Test Course once you unlock it.

You will unlock better cars, but, as the motors your rival drive also change once you select a different car, you'll find you don't always gain a huge advantage and you'll be able to get through much of Arcade mode using the above 'basic' models.

85-120 MINUTES
UNLOCKING THE ARCADE COURSES

Now you've nailed the techniques that'll whip you round the toughest apex, get unlocking those courses. Believe us, you'll need as much knowledge about the tracks as you can possibly get for GT mode.



THREE STEPS TO BRAKING

To achieve the fastest times you need a speedy car. A car so fast that it's starts to accelerate before you even think about putting your foot on the pedal. No diggedy. But there's no point having a blindingly fast vehicle if you can't control the speed effectively. To help you learn the 'way of the brake' we've outlined three effective ways of reducing your velocity. Remember, power is nothing without control.

1. NORMAL BRAKING

Many drivers are far too attached to their throttle for their own good. They neglect the fact that the brake is just as important. Braking is not a sign of weakness. It's a good thing. So be sure to gain the optimum braking effect by giving the **Ⓢ** button a firm squeeze. It's far more beneficial to over-brake as you'll lose less time than you would by skidding into verges or grazing barriers.



2. TUGGING THE HANDBRAKE

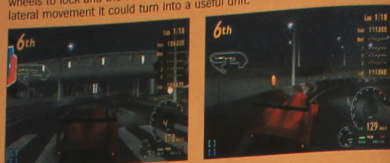
Conventional brakes are designed to lessen the chance of your car skidding. For example, the ABS (Anti Blocking System) quickly releases the wheels and re-brakes to prevent the wheels from locking and throwing your car into a uncontrollable slide.

Sometimes, however, it pays to live a little dangerously. The handbrake is designed to block the car's back wheel immediately and the effect it has is to swing the back end of your car round, enabling you to drift around corners. Have a crack using the **Ⓢ** button.



3. TAKE IT DOWN A GEAR

For those who've managed to discipline themselves to use the manual transmission there's a third way to slow the car, by shifting down the gears as you approach a corner. The one drawback with this is that it increases the revs of your engine, which can have the knock-on effect of causing your wheels to lock and the vehicle to swerve. However, if you can control this lateral movement it could turn into a useful drift.



PROFESSIONAL DIFFICULTY IN ARCADE MODE

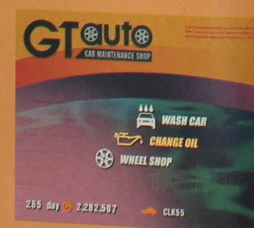
Don't think you work is over once you've finished the Hard courses on Arcade mode, as the toughest challenge is yet to come – the Professional Mode. To access this, go to the Level Selection menu screen and hold **Ⓢ** and **Ⓢ** together. If this is done correctly the Hard difficulty setting briefly changes to Professional.



HORSES FOR COURSES



If you want to get the most out of your motor, you must pay attention to every last detail. And just by changing the oil in your engine, you'll be able to squeeze another five percent extra horsepower (BHP) out of your car and you don't even have to get your fingers dirty. Simply go to 'My Home' and then to 'Garage'. Select a car and make note of the BHP figures using **Ⓢ** or **Ⓢ**. Next, go to 'GT Auto' and select the 'Change Oil' option which you should cost you only 250 Cr. Bargain! Now, when you return to check your BHP it'll have increased by approximately 5 percent (the increase differs depending on the car). To make sure your car is running at its maximum potential, you should make an oil change for every 300km you clock up.



GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC

THE TRACKS

Although many of the tracks are lifting straight out of GT2 on PSone, they never looked as detailed and realistic as this. Prepare to be amazed...



SUPER SPEEDWAY

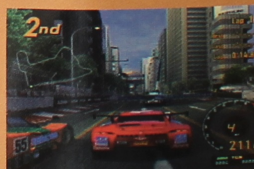
Difficulty: ★★★★★ Entertainment: ★★★★★

This is a pretty simple track, and it's one that requires very few sudden movements. Don't be afraid to take the corners hard and just keep a constant high speed around the two turns. Gently ease off the accelerator if you feel your car starting to slide a little, but do make sure that you hit the straights before your opponents if you want to win the race.

SMOKEY MOUNTAIN

Difficulty: ★★★★★

Quite an easy one to coax you into the rally side of things, this. Do watch out for the back end of the track though, when the corners will appear tougher than they really are because your car's bouncing all over the uneven road surface.



TOKYO R246

Difficulty: ★★★★★

Entertainment: ★★★★★

Once you've taken the first bend, things start to get really taxing. Move to the right of the short straight and brake when you get to the first set of rumble strips. Now move left and hit the power. Things should be a breeze now until the final turn when you'll have to brake hard to the right of the corner, before pulling out at a steady pace.

TRIAL MOUNTAIN



Difficulty: ★★★★★

Entertainment: ★★★★★

You should have a fairly trouble free run here – just watch out for the big right after the tunnel. You'll need to brake hard after the tunnel to make it through the first tough chicane – stay off the walls by braking, then applying gas before slowing through the walled bit.

MIDFIELD RACEWAY

Difficulty: ★★★★★

Entertainment: ★★★★★

The first bend isn't as easy as it looks, so move out to the left and nudge the brakes as you slide towards the centre of the track. After the long straight, you'll come up against an equally tough corner. Here, you'll need to brake hard when you see the turn right sign, then bomb under the bridge, before gliding out of the turn. Next up is the tough chicane. Take this as straight as possible or keep your speed up to the max and use the brakes to crawl out of this section.

LAGUNA SECA RACEWAY

Difficulty: ★★★★★ Entertainment: ★★★★★

To get yourself round the first corner, look at the road markings, and slam on the brakes when you see the number '2' painted on the road. Next comes the corkscrew. This looks easy on paper, but it's actually a nightmare, so drive up the hill until you reach the crest. Now hit the brakes, while gently sliding to the right before hitting the gas to speed out. Finally, the blind bend at the end of the lap is a nasty bugger, so you'll almost have to completely stop to get around it. Slam on the brakes and swing that baby around.



SWISS ALPS

Difficulty: ★★★★★

Entertainment: ★★★★★

The huge turn at the top of the track is going to cause the most worries here. Brake as you enter the first side of the turn and then let the back of your car swing out and around the corner. To get round the penultimate turn, brake early, head for the centre of the apex, and slow right down.

ROME CIRCUIT

Difficulty: ★★★★★

Entertainment: ★★★★★

Make progress round the first corner by hitting the edge of the yellow boxes on the kerb without really slowing down. It's now a relatively easy ride until you reach the two right angles at the end of the course. For the first one, hit the brakes and turn in early, then do the same move for the second bend.



TAHITI CIRCUIT

Difficulty: ★★★★★

Entertainment: ★★★★★

The two tight turns at the end of the track may cause you a little trouble, so use the brake sparingly and practice powersliding through these sections of the track. Keep your nose in and your rear out and you should be fine.

GRAND VALLEY SPEEDWAY

Difficulty: ★★★★★

Entertainment: ★★★★★

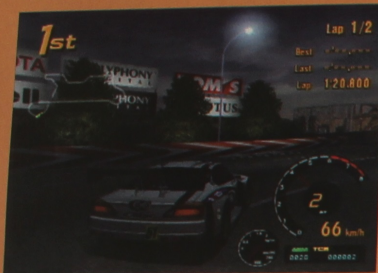
The first corner can really hurt, so start by hitting the brakes early there. Then get ready for the whopping hairpin – you'll need to brake hard and keep right around this one. Finally, you'll have to slam on full lock with your foot ever so slightly off the gas for the tunnel curve.

THE OFFICIAL GUIDE

SPECIAL STAGE ROUTE 5

Difficulty: ★★★★★ Entertainment: ★★★★★

A pretty simple track until you reach the large S-bend at the middle part of the course. To do this, brake when you make the second zebra crossing the inside of the bend. You should be able to take the rest of the track with relative ease, but beware the last little turn before the end of the lap. Here you'll need to brake early and tuck tightly into the bend. You should now complete the lap with no problems at all.



DEEP FOREST RACEWAY

Difficulty: ★★★★★ Entertainment: ★★★★★

You'll bomb away from the start line, so make sure you slow down enough to take the very first corner. Apply caution and approach slowly for the smoothest ride. Now prepare yourself for the tunnel on the bend. To get this bit right, brake on entry and then on the way out to avoid any serious loss of seconds. A difficult course in inexperienced hands, you'll probably need a few tries to perfect it.



SEATTLE CIRCUIT

Difficulty: ★★★★★ Entertainment: ★★★★★

The very first hairpin will cause you some annoying problems on this track. All you have to do, though, is brake hard and early before turning close to the inside of the bend. You should be able to take the rest of the track with relative ease, but beware the last little turn before the end of the lap. Here you'll need to brake early and tuck tightly into the bend. You should now complete the lap with no problems at all.



TEST COURSE

Difficulty: ★★★★★ Entertainment: ★★★★★

This is dead easy. Just follow the good old racing line at flat-out speed, ensuring you slipstream all the way until that final bend – your car (and its acceleration speed) dictate when you should pull out from behind the leader and go for broke. But don't use the Mini. It's rubbish.



COTE D'AZUR

Difficulty: ★★★★★ Entertainment: ★★★★★

The top end of the track, with its double S-bend, will cause the most problems here. So go very slowly, starting from the left before tucking right, then crawling to the left as the corner forces you round. Stay left and ease across the apex of the last part of the bend. Things are quite simple now until you get to the opposite end of the track. Here, get round the bend by braking hard and late, then speed out of the bend to the finish.



APRICOT HILL RACEWAY

Difficulty: ★★★★★ Entertainment: ★★★★★

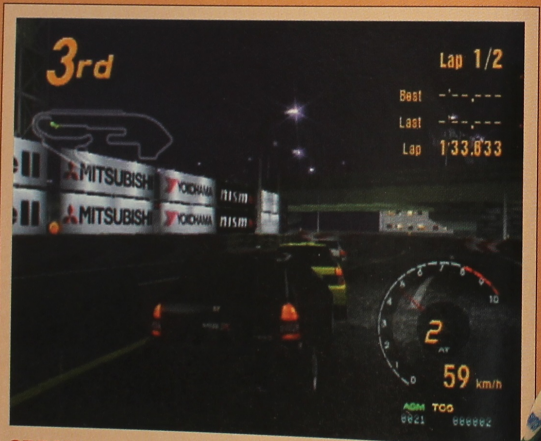
The high hairpin in the middle of the course will cause most problems here. You'll have to crawl around it before hitting the gas pedal when you're in the clear. The last long bend at the end of the race can cause problems. Brake and slide around the first part of the bend and stay fairly narrow to get out of it without too many bumps.



TAHITI MAZE

Difficulty: ★★★★★ Entertainment: ★★★★★

Get through the group of S-bends near the beginning by braking very hard and using loads of countersteer to get from right to left and then back again. Use the same technique for the last set of S-bends too – just make sure you smack the steering lock right down.



SPECIAL STAGE ROUTE 11

Difficulty: ★★★★★ Entertainment: ★★★★★

Watch out for the huge S-bend about a third of the way through the course – you're best off aiming for the middle of the track, braking a lot, before hugging the right and then sweeping the left hand side of the road, and ease through the middle of the corner before hugging the inside and then moving out wide to the right.

THE CARS

From the humble Mini to the speedy Skyline, here's GT3's full vehicle rota. (Note: cars available as bonuses include sale price).

ACURA	WILL SELL FOR
3.2 CL Type-S (2000)	
Integra Type-R (1996)	
NSX (1993)	
NSX 1.7i	
RS-X Type-S (2001)	£7,500

ALFA ROMEO	WILL SELL FOR
156 V6 2.5v	

ASTON MARTIN	WILL SELL FOR
DB7 Vantage Coupe (2000)	
V8 Vantage (1997)	
V12 Vanquish (2000)	£70,00

AUDI	WILL SELL FOR
S4 (1999)	
TT 1.8 T Quattro (2000)	£11,645

BMW	WILL SELL FOR
320d (1999)	

CHEVROLET	WILL SELL FOR
Camaro SS (2000)	£7,382
Camaro Z28 (1997)	
Camaro Z28 (1997)	
Corvette C5-R (2000)	£250,000
Gonette Z06 (2000)	
Corvette GrandSport (1996)	

CHRYSLER	WILL SELL FOR
PT Cruiser (2000)	
Viper GTSR Team Oreca (2000)	

CITROËN	WILL SELL FOR
Xsara Rally Car (1999)	

DAIHATSU	WILL SELL FOR
Cuore TR-XX Avanzato R (1997)	£2,785
Sirion X4 (1998)	

DODGE	WILL SELL FOR
Viper GTS (1998)	
Viper GTS-R Concept (2000)	£75,000

F1	WILL SELL FOR
F094/H	£250,000
F094/S	£875,000
F686/M	£287,500
F090/S	£312,500
F687/S	£287,500
F688/S	£300,000

FIAT	WILL SELL FOR
Coupe Turbo Plus (2000)	

FORD	WILL SELL FOR
Escort Rally Car (1998)	£87,500
Focus WRC (1998)	£87,500
GT40 (1966)	£245,000
GT40 Gulf Racer (1969)	
Mustang SVT Cobra R (2000)	

GILLET	WILL SELL FOR
Vertigo Race Car (1997)	£300,000

HONDA	WILL SELL FOR
Accord Euro R (2000)	
Artia NSX (2000)	£312,500
Castrol Mugen NSX (2000)	£312,500
Civic SiR-II (1993)	
Civic Type-R (1999)	
CRX 1.6 VTI (1999)	
Integra Type-R (1998)	
NSX Type-R (1992)	
NSX Type-S Zero (1997)	
Raybrig NSX (2000)	
S2000 (1999)	
S2000 LM Race Car (2000)	£187,500
S2000 Mugen Tuned (2000)	
S2000 Type-V (2000)	

JAGUAR	WILL SELL FOR
XJ220 Race Car (1992)	£375,000
XJ220 Road Car (1992)	
XKR Coupe (1999)	

LANCIA	WILL SELL FOR
Delta HF Integrale Rally Car	£125,000

LISTER	WILL SELL FOR
Storm V12 Race Car (1999)	£299,500

LOTUS	WILL SELL FOR
Elise 190 (1998)	£14,632
Esprit Sport 350 (2000)	
Esprit V8-SE (1998)	
Motor Sport Elise (1999)	

MAZDA	WILL SELL FOR
787B (1991)	£500,000
Demio GLX (1999)	
MX-6 (1989)	£4,225
MX-6 (1993)	£4,250
MX-6 1.8i (2000)	
MX-6 1.8iS (1998)	£5,737
Roadster LM Race Car (2000)	£187,500
RX-7 RS (1998)	
RX-7 RZ (2000)	
RX-8 (2001)	£75,000
Savanna RX-7 Infiniti III (1990)	£8,075

MERCEDES-BENZ	WILL SELL FOR
CL600 (2000)	
CLK 55 (2000)	
CLK Touring Car (2000)	
SLK 230 Kompressor (1999)	£13,827

MINE'S	WILL SELL FOR
GTRN1 V-Spec (2000)	£50,000
Lancer Evolution VI GSR	

MINI	WILL SELL FOR
Cooper 1.3i (1999)	£4,207

MITSUBISHI	WILL SELL FOR
3000GT VR-4 Turbo (1995)	
3000GT VR-4 Turbo (1999)	
FTO GP Version R (1997)	
FTO LM Race Car (2000)	£187,500
Lancer Evolution IV GSR (1996)	£7,495
Lancer Evolution V GSR (1998)	£8,120
Lancer Evolution VI GSR (1999)	
Lancer Evolution VII RS (1999)	
Lancer Evolution VII GSR (2000)	£75,000
Lancer Evolution VII Rally Car	
Prototype (2001)	£87,500
Lancer Evolution VII RS (2001)	

MUGEN	WILL SELL FOR
Mugen S2000 (2000)	

NISMO	WILL SELL FOR
400R (1996)	£30,000
GT-R LM Road Car (1995)	£75,000
Skyline GTR R-tune (2000)	
Skyline GTR S-tune (2000)	£25,000



NISSAN	WILL SELL FOR
200SX (1996)	
200SX Type-X (1996)	
300ZX Twin Turbo 2b2b (1998)	
300ZX Twin Turbo Zester (1998)	
Cadillac Skyline (2000)	
Cadillac Racer Silvia (2001)	
Locust Zest (2000)	£50,000
Penzoil NISMO GTR (1999)	
R390 GT1 LM Race Car (1998)	£500,000
R390 GT1 Road Car (1998)	£550,000
Silvia K's 1800cc (1988)	£4,715
Silvia K's 2000cc (1991)	
Silvia spec-R Aero (1999)	
Silvia Varietta (2000)	
Skyline GTR V-spec R33 (1997)	
Skyline GTR V-spec II R32 (1994)	
Skyline GTR V-spec R34 (1999)	
Skyline GTR V-spec II R34 (2000)	
Skyline GTS-4 Type-M (1991)	
Z Concept (2001)	£75,000

OPEL	WILL SELL FOR
Astra Touring Car (2000)	
Speedster (2000)	
Calibra Touring Car (1995)	£375,000

PAGANI	WILL SELL FOR
Zonda C12 (2000)	
Zonda C12 Race Car (2000)	£375,000
Zonda S (2000)	£88,110

PEUGEOT	WILL SELL FOR
206 Rally Car (1999)	£87,500
206 S16 (1999)	

RENAULT	WILL SELL FOR
Clio Sport Race Car (2000)	£75,000
Clio Sport V6 24V (2000)	

RUF	WILL SELL FOR
3400S (2000)	
CTR 2 (1996)	£95,500
RGT (2000)	£48,000

SHELBY	WILL SELL FOR
Cobra (1997)	£125,000

SPOON	WILL SELL FOR
Civic Type-R (1999)	£25,000
S2000 (2000)	
S2000 Race Car (2000)	£50,000

SUBARU	WILL SELL FOR
Impreza 22B STi (1998)	
Impreza LM Race Car (1999)	£187,500
Impreza Rally Car (1998)	£75,000
Impreza Rally Car Prototype (2001)	£87,500
Impreza Sedan WRX STi (2000)	£7,297
Impreza Sedan WRX STi	
Version VI (1999)	
Impreza Sports Wagon GT-APex (1985)	
Impreza Wagon WRX STi Version VI (1999)	
Legacy B4 Blitzen (1999)	
Legacy B4 RSK (1998)	
Legacy Touring Wagon GT-B (1996)	

SUZUKI	WILL SELL FOR
Also known as Suzuki Sports Limited (1997)	£3,855
Escudo Pikes Peak Version (1998)	£250,000

TICKFORD	WILL SELL FOR
Falcon XR8 Race Car (2000)	£375,000

TOMMYKAI	WILL SELL FOR
Z-1 (2000)	£125,000
ZZ-S (1999)	

TOM'S	WILL SELL FOR
X400 Chaser (2000)	

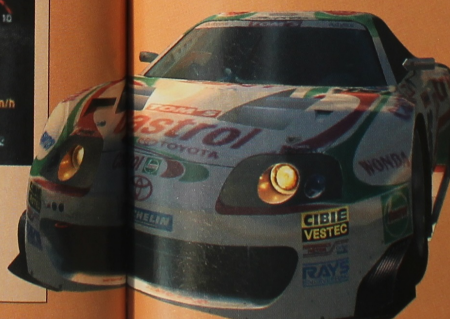
TOYOTA	WILL SELL FOR
Altetta RS2000 Lexus S (1998)	
Altetta LM Race Car (2000)	£187,500
Altetta RS2000 (1998)	
Castrol Tom's Supra (2000)	£312,500
Celica GT-Four (1995)	£6,165
Celica SS-II (1995)	£5,430
Celica SS-II (1999)	£4,925
Celica Rally Car (1999)	£75,000
Corolla Rally Car (1999)	£75,000
Denso Sard Supra (2000)	
GT-One Race Car (1998)	£500,000
GT-One Road Car (1999)	£550,000
MR2 (1999)	
MR2 G-Limited (1998)	
MR2 GT-S (1998)	
Sprinter Trueno GT-APex (1985)	£3,387
Sprinter Trueno GT-APex Shigeno Version (2000)	
SuperAutoBacs Apex MR-S (2000)	£75,000
Supra RZ (1997)	£11,290
Supra SZ-R (1997)	
Yaris Euro Edition (2000)	
Yaris RS 1.5 (2000)	£3,632

TRD	WILL SELL FOR
Celica TRD Sports M (2000)	

TVR	WILL SELL FOR
Griffith 500 (1998)	£15,602
Speed 12 (2000)	£200,000
Tuscan Speed Six (2000)	

VAUXHALL	WILL SELL FOR
Astra Touring Car (2000)	
Calibra Touring Car (1995)	
VX 220 (2000)	

VOLKSWAGEN	WILL SELL FOR
Lupo Cup Car (2000)	
New Beetle (2000)	
New Beetle Cup Car (2000)	£18,750
New Beetle RSi (2000)	£17,500



GETTING A GOOD DEAL ON NEW CARS

The Trade function in My Home (in Gran Turismo mode) allows you to take a look at the Garage data on another Memory Card - for example, that of a friend. You can acquire each car in this other Garage in the form of a 1:1 copy at the normal retail price. But that's not all - any tuning parts which may have been installed are also included in the price. You can make use of this in numerous ways:

ACQUIRING A SLIGHTLY TUNED CAR AT A RETAIL PRICE OF LESS THAN 18000 CR.

When starting out in Gran Turismo mode, buy a vehicle of your choice, but don't spend the initial 18000 Cr. Use the rest of the money to tune your car and/or carry out an Oil Change in GT Auto. Then save your game and insert the Memory Card in Slot 2, but not necessarily in that order.

Now restart your PS2 and go back to Gran Turismo mode. Using the Trade function, load the game you just saved and buy a copy of the aforementioned car at the normal retail price. The vehicle still has all its tuning parts, and its BHP figure has been increased by the oil change. Using any remaining money, you can upgrade the car a little more. The next time you save, you simply overwrite the previous save game. Bargain!

ACQUIRING A HIGHLY TUNED CAR FROM A FRIEND AT A RETAIL PRICE OF LESS THAN 18000 CR.

You can do this when starting off in Gran Turismo mode, if your friend already has a tuned vehicle, which cost less than 18000 Cr. Now, using the Trade function, you can acquire a copy of this car... and the tuning parts are thrown in for free!

ACQUIRING A HIGHLY TUNED CAR FROM A FRIEND, REGARDLESS OF RETAIL PRICE. In this situation, you have already completed some races with a car of a specific drive type. Meanwhile, your friend has bought a car with a different drive type and tuned it in order to participate in a race, which requires your friend's drive type, just use the Trade function. You can now acquire a tuned vehicle with the required drive type at a good price.



CHECKLIST

One of the tricks for a successful GT3 campaign is to learn how to get the most for your money. The following five tables show which are the ten best models in terms of performance (price of engine performance per weight) depending on your budget.

BEST PRICE TO PERFORMANCE RATIO FOR CARS UP TO 18000 CR.				
Rank	Car	Drive Type	Price in Cr.	Max Power (BHP)
1	Mazda MX-5 (1993)	FR	16900	128
2	Mazda MX-5 (1989)	FR	17000	118
3	Chrysler PT Cruiser	FF	17980	149
4	Daihatsu Sirion X4	4WD	13900	118
5	Toyota Sprinter Trueno GT Apex (1985)	FR	13550	128
6	Toyota Yaris RS 1.5	FF	14530	108
7	Mazda Demio GL-X	FF	14660	98
8	Volkswagen New Beetle	FF	15930	115
9	Toyota Yaris Euro Edition	FF	12280	86
10	Suzuki Alto Works SUZUKI Sports Limited	4WD	12220	63

BEST PRICE TO PERFORMANCE RATIO FOR CARS UP TO 30000 CR.				
Rank	Car	Drive Type	Price in Cr.	Max Power (BHP)
1	Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution VII GSR	4WD	29980	276
2	Subaru Impreza Sedan WRX STI Version VI	4WD	29190	276
3	Subaru Impreza Sports Wagon WRX STI	4WD	29980	276
4	Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution VI RS	4WD	25980	276
5	Subaru Impreza Wagon WRX STI Version VI	4WD	29190	276
6	Chevrolet Camaro SS	FR	29530	276
8	Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution VII RS	4WD	25180	276
9	Subaru Legacy Touring Wagon GT-B	4WD	29330	276
10	Subaru Legacy B4 Blitzzen	4WD	30000	276

BEST PRICE TO PERFORMANCE RATIO FOR CARS UP TO 50000 CR.				
Rank	Car	Drive Type	Price in Cr.	Max Power (BHP)
1	Subaru Impreza 22B STI Version	4WD	50000	267
2	Toyota Supra RZ	FR	44800	276
3	Mazda RX-7 Type RZ	FR	39980	276
4	Chevrolet Corvette Grand Sport	FR	40010	330
5	Mazda RX-7 Type RS	FR	37780	276
6	Renault Clio Sport V6 24V	MR	43400	226
7	Mitsubishi 3000GT VR-4 Turbo (1995)	4WD	43230	276
8	Mitsubishi 3000GT VR-4 Turbo (1999)	4WD	43230	276
9	Nissan 300ZX Twin Turbo 2X2	FR	43980	276
10	Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution VI GSR Tommi	4WD	32780	276

BEST PRICE TO PERFORMANCE RATIO FOR CARS UP TO 100000 CR.				
Rank	Car	Drive Type	Price in Cr.	Max Power (BHP)
1	Lotus Motor Sport Elise	MR	100000	200
2	TVR Tuscan Speed Six	FR	80780	359
3	Dodge Viper GTS	FR	78680	449
4	Honda NSX Type-S Zero	MR	98570	276
5	Honda NSX Type-R	MR	99570	276
6	Mercedes-Benz CLK 55	FR	93110	347
7	TVR Griffith 500	FR	62410	340
8	Acura NSX (1993)	MR	99570	276
9	Acura NSX (1997)	MR	94790	289
10	RUF 3400S	MR	76740	305

BEST PRICE TO PERFORMANCE RATIO FOR ALL CARS.				
Rank	Car	Drive Type	Price in Cr.	Max Power (BHP)
1	Suzuki Escudo Pikes Peak Version	4WD	1000000	981
2	Panoz Esperante GTR-1	FR	2000000	588
3	Tickford Falcon XR8 Race Car	FR	1500000	599
4	Gillet Vertigo Race Car	FR	1200000	419
5	Chevrolet Corvette C5R	FR	1000000	620
6	Toyota Castrol Tom's Supra	FR	125000	463
7	Honda Castrol Mugen NSX	MR	125000	473
8	Lister Storm V12 Race Car	FR	1198000	593
9	Nissan Pennzoi NISMO GT-R	FR	785000	493
10	Jaguar XJ220 Road Car	MR	780000	516



GRAN TURISMO 3: A-SPEC

YOUR GAME STATUS

You can call up your Game Status in My Home (in Gran Turismo mode). Take a look at it to find various details, including a percentage figure with the note 'Complete'.

The 'Complete' percentage figure represents the number of License Tests, races and other challenges, which you have already mastered. To achieve 100 percent, The individual criteria are:

- Passing the 48 License Tests - regardless of whether you take home gold, silver or bronze.
- Achieving first place in all races in Gran Turismo mode.
- Achieving first place in all 36 Single Races in Arcade mode at difficulty level Hard.
- Achieving first place in all ten Time Attacks in Arcade mode.



BONUS CARS FOR SPECIAL ACHIEVEMENTS

The following two tables illustrate how you get bonus cars for special achievements. For your information, Arcade mode bonus cars are only available in the Arcade mode.

For the bonus cars obtained in the Gran Turismo mode, you can also access them in Arcade mode via the Load Garage menu. You obtain additional bonus cars in the Gran Turismo mode races. We've had a lot of interest in the so-called 'F1' cars. They're not F1 cars at all - you'll find them under Polyphony Racing Cars. The Polyphony Racing Cars are of particular interest because they've been specially created by the programmers as outrageous racing machines. They're so secret that even if James Bond was a racing driver the hapless spy still wouldn't know about them.

BONUS CARS FOR GRAN TURISMO MODE

CRITERIA	BONUS CAR	WILL SELL FOR
Obtain gold in all Domestic A License Tests.	Mazda RX-8	cr75,000
Obtain gold in all Domestic B License Tests.	Mazda MX-5 1.8i	cr5,820
Obtain gold in all International A License Tests.	Aston Martin Vanquish	cr70,000
Obtain gold in all International B License Tests.	Nissan Z Concept	cr75,000
Get gold in all Rally License Tests.	Subaru Impreza Rally Car Prototype	cr87,500
Obtain gold in Special-Level License Tests	Dodge Viper GTS R concept	cr75,000
Reach 1st Place in all Beginner League races.	Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution V GSR	cr8,120
Reach 1st Place in all Amateur League races.	Chrysler Viper GTS R Team Oreca	cr250,000
Reach 1st Place in all Professional League races.	Polyphony Racing Car	n/a
Reach 1st Place in all Professional League races.	Suzuki Escudo Pikes Peak Version	cr250,000
Reach 1st Place in all Endurance Races.	Polyphony Racing Car	n/a
Achieve a Complete Game Status of 50 percent.	Chevrolet Corvette C5R	cr250,000
Achieve a Complete Game Status of 75 percent.	Mazda 787B	cr500,000
Achieve a Complete Game Status of 100 percent.	Polyphony Racing Car	n/a

BONUS CARS FOR ARCADE MODE

CRITERIA	BONUS CAR	WILL SELL FOR
Reach 1st Place in all Time Trials in Arcade mode.	Panoz Esperante GTR-1	cr500,000
Reach 1st Place in all A-Area courses in Normal mode.	Mazda MX-5 (1989)	cr4,225
Reach 1st Place in all B-Area courses in Normal mode.	Audi TT 1.8 T quattro	cr11,645
Reach 1st Place in all C-Area courses in Normal mode.	Mazda RX-8	cr75,000
Reach 1st Place in all D-Area courses in Normal mode.	Nissan Z Concept	cr40,000
Reach 1st Place in all E-Area courses in Normal mode.	RUF RGT and TVR Tuscan Speed Six	cr75,000/cr200,000
Reach 1st Place in all F-Area courses in Normal mode.	Dodge Viper GTS R concept and TVR Speed 12	cr50,000
Reach 1st Place in all A-Area courses in Hard mode.	Nissan C-West R350 Silvia	cr125,000
Reach 1st Place in all B-Area courses in Hard mode.	Lancia Delta HF Integrale Rally Car	cr300,000
Reach 1st Place in all C-Area courses in Hard mode.	Gillet Vertigo Race Car	cr375,000
Reach 1st Place in all D-Area courses in Hard mode.	Pagani Zonda Race Car	cr500,000/cr500,000
Reach 1st Place in all E-Area courses in Hard mode.	Nissan R390 GT1 LM Race Car and Panoz Esperante GTR-1	cr500,000/cr500,000
Reach 1st Place in all F-Area courses in Hard mode.	Mazda 787B and Toyota GT-One Road Car	cr500,000/cr500,000

CRAZY TAXI

Become the fastest/craziest/wealthiest cabbie in the whole of 'Frisco with our essential guide to Sega's frenzied fare-'em-up. Taxi!

TEN TIPS

1. Stop as close as possible to the punters to save valuable time.
2. Try and set down a passenger in the same circle as another punter waiting to be picked up.
3. Drive in continuous laps, collecting passengers as you go.
4. Remember that Green customers pay the most.
5. Some customers change their colour. Watch out for this.
6. Crazy Dash as often as possible.
7. Rack up the combos to get tips.
8. Don't just follow the arrow, keep an eye out for short cuts.
9. Make use of the ramps to jump over intersections rather than driving round.
10. Crazy Drift for rapid 180° turns.



Picking Up Punters

Always stop as close as possible to each customer. If they have to run, you have less time to drop them off, and they yell at you. Obviously, it's easy to think a couple of extra metres don't matter. They do. If you know where the passenger is heading, try to face in that direction when you stop, preferably with a Crazy Drift. If you are not sure, hedge your bets and stop halfway between the two directions. Both courses are complete circuits, so the best way to play is to continuously complete laps. On the arcade track, this means you must go through town, along the freeway, to downtown, to the bus terminal and round to the university again. It makes sense then to try and pick up fares that won't have you backtracking.



Tips Tips

Every time you pull off a Crazy Hit trick, a tip is added to your fare. Crazy Hits then link into combos until you have a front-end collision with another vehicle after which the combo-meter resets. Good pieces to rack up the tips are driving like a nutter on the traffic-heavy freeway, and following the cable car going down the hill. It's worth remembering that your tips are doubled if you drive on the wrong side of the road. And when you drop your punter off they will provide a tip based on your remaining time. You usually get \$6 for every full second of time that's left. So speed is your best friend.



The Colour Of Money

All potential customers have their own colour code corresponding to the distance they want to go and therefore the potential earnings you can make from picking them up. Look out for the Green customers, they travel the farthest and pay the most, while Reds go the shortest and pay the least. For maximum earnings your customer priority should be: Green, Lime, Yellow, Orange, Red. NB. Some customers change colour. For example, at the bus terminal some will switch from Red to Yellow. Again, use the colour codes to pick up the ones that want to travel the furthest.



Driving Tips

The green arrow does not necessarily point out the fastest route from starting point to destination, and there are plenty of sneaky short cuts if you're prepared to go hunting. On the Arcade track, for example, if you're trying to get from KFC to the ballpark, ignore the big S-curve and cut straight up the grassy hill instead. When continuing onto the baseball stadium, practice your Crazy Drift jumping skills and leap off the edge of the hairpin bend rather than going all the way around it.



Hidden Customers

Each hidden customer you pick up in the Arcade city should net you \$2,500-\$4,000. Here's how to find them.

1. Not strictly hidden, but at the beginning of the game, instead of driving forward, hit reverse. Pick up the woman directly behind you and she will pay for a ride right to the bottom of the hill. Easy money.
2. At the hotel/crown area, look between the two buildings near the intersection and you'll see a tennis player, who wants to go to the tennis court. Game, set and match - your wallet.
3. Past The Levi's Store, there's a multistorey car park. Drive up the ramp, hug the left side and pick up the old lady on the rooftop. She wants to go all the way to the police station. Bless.



CRAZY DRIVING

Crazy Taxi isn't just about getting from A to B. It's about getting from A to B in the craziest way possible. With this in mind, here's a selection of outlandish driving manoeuvres without which your fare-earning prospects will be very limited.

Crazy Dash

What is it? A turbo burst that should be used as often as possible, but especially when moving off from a stationary position.

How's it done? From Reverse, press Drive and Accelerate simultaneously.

Crazy Drift

What is it? A handbrake turn-type skid that

causes the cab's rear end to spin out, making it ideal for swinging round sharp corners. Keep drifting and you can spin continuously through 360°, racking up combos that earn a bonus.

Crazy Back Dash

What is it? Simply the Crazy Dash but in reverse.

How's it done? Perform a Crazy Dash and quickly shift into Reverse.

Crazy Back Drift

What is it? The Reverse drift spins your car 180°

and then you continue driving backwards. Great for when you mistakenly shoot past a punter.

How's it done? When accelerating forwards, quickly shift into Drive and then back into Reverse while turning sharply left or right.

Limit Cut

What is it? A more powerful, longer-lasting speed boost than the Crazy Dash which can only be used when you're approaching top speed. Ideal for long stretches of road, attempt the Limit Cut in more confined areas and you'll just crash in a humiliating heap.

How's it done? Crazy Dash twice in succession to burn up to maximum speed.

Crazy Stop

What is it? Coming to an immediate halt to collect punters and earn tips.

How's it done? Either tap Reverse and slam on the Brakes or simply crash headlong into the nearest pole/building.

Crazy Jump combos

Keep an eye out for ramps to perform several jumps in a row and crank up the tips.

Crazy Through combos

By narrowly skirting past cars you can build up massive Crazy Through combos that lead to some heap big tippage.

CRAZY BOX

You've earned great big piles of lovely moolah and picked up all the outrageous skills required to be a successful Crazy Taxi driver, now it's time to put those abilities to the ultimate test (and learn a few more) with the fantastic challenges found inside the Crazy Box.



1-2



Crazy Flag

Still warming up, but this time you're going to need to practice your Crazy Drift skills. The key to hitting the flag at the far end of the beach in record time is to kick off with a Crazy Dash and perform a Crazy Drift immediately toggle Reverse then Drive rapidly, while turning) to pull off a blisteringly fast U-turn. See the flag? Floor it and with the help of a few more Crazy Dashes you should be able to hit the fluttering swine in under ten seconds. Remember, you don't need to brake on the spot so just keep that finger on the accelerator.

Challenge Rating: 4/10



Crazy Drifts

Pulling off the 15 combos required to clear this challenge isn't too hard, but a word of warning. Keep off the grass. It saps your speed and will lose you valuable time as you crank it up again to Crazy Drift. Try and stay on the Tarmac and you'll make your life a whole lot easier. Remember the mantra of accelerate, drift, accelerate and you should be able to get an outstanding score of 30 combos.

Challenge Rating: 5/10

CRAZY TAXI

1-1



Crazy Jump

This is the entry point into Crazy Box and aims to get you off to a flying start in more ways than one. It's relatively straightforward but requires you to master the Crazy Dash to pass the 150m clear point. But why settle for a pass? Squeeze three Crazy Dashes in and you'll soon be flying past the 300 metre mark on every attempt. A blistering start is essential. Let the speed build then Crazy Dash at around the midway point down the ramp and once again as you speed to the edge of the jump. See if you can manage to pull off a 400 metre jump.

Challenge Rating: 2/10

1-3



Crazy Balloons

This is fairly tricky as the groups of balloons often disperse when you hit them. Just use plenty of Crazy Drifts to change direction rapidly and line yourself up with those ahead of you. It's not that difficult to burst them all but getting a record time (around 30 seconds, we reckon) is bloody difficult as the single balloons on the outskirts of the arena take valuable time to reach. Plot a route for maximum efficiency, beginning with the two single balloons directly ahead of you at the start.

Challenge Rating: 5/10

CODES

Crazy Bike mode

On the character select screen, hold **□** + **□**, then release **□** and then **□**. Hold **□** + **□** again and then release both simultaneously before finally pressing **□**. If the code has worked you will hear the sound of a bicycle bell and whichever character you choose, they will start the game riding a bike instead of driving a taxi. Crazy!

Expert mode

At the main menu, press and hold **□** + **□**. Continue to hold these buttons until the character select screen appears, then press **□** to select the game mode. Now, when you begin play, the words 'Expert mode' will appear in the lower-left corner of the screen. In this mode, there are no destination or arrow indicators, making the game much harder.

Another Day mode

Press **□** on the character select screen and then release it. Then hold **□** again and press **□**. Now when you begin play, the words 'Another Day' will appear in the lower-left corner of the screen. In this mode, the layout of the city has been altered.

To unlock the Crazy Bike mode in Another Day, go to the character select screen and press **□** + **□** + **□** + **□**.

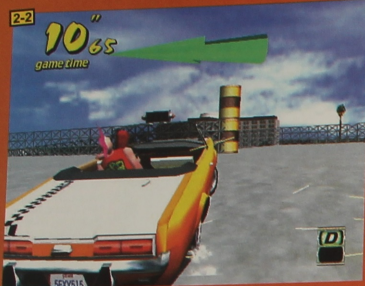
Alternate Display

Start a game in Arcade or Original mode, making sure you have a second controller plugged in. Now, while playing, hold **□** + **□** and press **□** on controller two to switch to a first-person view, or press **□** to flick to a rather mad pass-by camera angle.



CRAZY GUIDE

CRAZY BOX CONTINUED...



Crazy Turn
A simple task but hard if you're still not Crazy Drifting with confidence. All you need to do is drift around each corner take the ramp and finish in the end zone before the clock runs out. Take each corner as wide as you can and remember that when you finish a drift you'll continue in the direction your bonnet's facing so time the end well. It's entirely possible to Crazy Drift off the end of the ramp and land facing the finish point. Perfect this move and you'll be laughing.
Challenge Rating: 6/10



Crazy Rush
This one is a real stinker but never fear. It can be done. Time is incredibly tight here, so wasting time picking up or dropping off punters is out of the question. The way to make sure you do this is to simultaneously Crazy Drift and brake as you approach the drop off points. It's not the easiest manoeuvre but once you've got it down you'll always come to a rest facing the remaining customers. It goes without saying you'll need to Crazy Dash as soon as the punter hops aboard.
Challenge Rating: 8/10



Crazy Pole
This is a real hardboiled challenge. As with Crazy Rush, you'll have to brake and Crazy Drift using poles as stopping aids. Do this and you'll come to a halt alongside them and facing the remaining customers. This time, one Crazy Dash per leg won't be enough – not if you want to get an outstanding time. Even though it does make stopping dead all the more dicy, try to fit a couple of Dashes in between each drop off point.
Challenge Rating: 8/10



Crazy Bowd
This is the first really awkward challenge, requiring you to Crazy Drift off the ramps and, then line up with the next jump. The trick is to skid so you leave each ramp side-on, flying through the air sideways and landing ready to drive straight on to the next ramp. The penultimate ramp is a cheeky little number, because more often than not – unless your turn is incredibly tight – you'll shoot straight into the sea. On the final stretch, remember to brake into the end zone as it's all too easy to fly off the edge into the water below, as shown in the embarrassing screenshot above.
Challenge Rating: 8/10



Crazy Jam
Ready for some precision driving? Three passengers, one hell of a lot of traffic and no time to waste make this a blast. Again, time is short so you can't afford a single pang. Here's what you have to do. Get moving with a Crazy Dash and head straight on to drop off your first and pick up your second passenger. The next section isn't such a breeze and will require some very sharp reflexes as you pick your way through the traffic. Even so, you'll need to throw a couple of Crazy Dashes in there to make your life easier later on. After that there's a relatively straight route through the traffic. It's tight but you can hammer along quite happily. You will, however, need to swerve across several lanes of traffic to reach the third passenger. Thankfully, the final leg of the challenge is pretty straight forward.
Challenge Rating: 6/10



CRAZY CABBIES

They may look comical but just how dangerous are these crazy additions to the San Francisco taxi ranks?



AXEL MCDERMOTT
The gentle handling, speed and braking of Axel's ride makes him the ideal choice for learner drivers. On the downside, though, he's not quite as quick as Joe or Gena, and his slightly dodgy tyres make him prone to wobbling a bit on unsurfaced areas – especially when pulling Limit Cuts.
Car: Coup De Ville



GENA TURNER
Gina's by far the most nimble driver, and her confident braking also enables her to pick up and drop off passengers with ease. Her handling tends to slip a bit at top speed, so be careful not to hit other vehicles. If you master Crazy Recoveries – a combination of Crazy Dashes and Limit Cuts – then you shouldn't have any problems.
Car: Ford Mustang



BD JOE
BD is best left alone until you've become proficient at the game's more technical driving. His high top speeds are great for rushing about town, but his car has the worst traction due to its slick racing tyres. However, this loose handling is ideal for extreme stunts and makes BD Joe the man to take on the Crazy Box challenges.
Car: Cadillac Eldorado



GUS
Gus has the heaviest car so he doesn't accelerate too well without Crazy Dashing like mad. What Gus really triumphs in is hardcore handling. His fat tyres mean that his cab grips superbly no matter how recklessly you're driving. His brakes aren't too hot though, so use the Crazy Stop to bring him to a halt.
Car: Plymouth Fury

CRAZY BOX BONUS MISSIONS

Is there no end to Crazy Taxi's generous gameplay? Complete a row of three Crazy Box challenges and you'll unlock some tougher bonus games for your trouble. Read on to find out what they are and how to get the better of them.



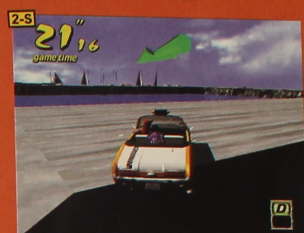
Crazy Bowling
And you thought Tokken Bowl was fun? Try this on for size. You're driving around an arena dotted with pins and have a limited amount of time to knock them all down. As you'd expect, you can't afford to miss a single pin if you want to beat the challenge. The key to this one is to approach each triangle of pins from the side and pull off a delicious Crazy Drift at the last instant. This way you'll broadcast the whole lot and position yourself perfectly for the next set. Watch out for the sidings if you overshoot, as you can get trapped in them and waste time you simply don't have.
Challenge Rating: 8/10



Crazy Through
After that last one this is a picnic. A Crazy Through is a near-miss with another vehicle so, all you have to do is speed close to or between the heavy traffic on the road. Drive safely and the 30 combo pass mark is easily achievable. However, crash with another car and the slate is wiped clean forcing you to start from scratch. The best way through is to maintain a fairly direct course with rather than against the flow of traffic. Playing chicken with oncoming traffic just isn't worth it. At least here.
Challenge Rating: 6/10



Crazy Attack
The seventh Crazy Taxi bonus mission is only opened up once you've completed all six main bonus missions. The object of this mini-game is to make a complete circuit (anti-clockwise) of the Arcade City within a four-minute time limit. The traffic is very busy and you'll have to pull off a virtually flawless lap. Crazy Dashing all collect your hard won reward. A push bike which can be accessed from the cable selection screen. Well done you. Just watch out for any taxis while you're out and about on your bike. Apparently they're a bunch of maniacs.
Challenge Rating: 11/10



Crazy Zigzag
Control is everything on this challenge. If you've mastered the Crazy Drift (and if you haven't you're unlikely to be here in the first place) you should be fine. Relatively speaking. Each corner is a right angle, so it's helpful to remember that stopping a Crazy Drift allows you to drive on in the direction in which you terminated the Drift. With this in mind the best way to tackle the challenge is to Crazy Drift over the gap at the intersection of each bend, leaping slightly over the space below. This way you'll shoot straight ahead on to the next strip of road. Bear in mind that the road is very narrow (about twice the width of your taxi) making room for error negligible.
Challenge Rating: 9/10



Crazy Parking
The object here is to make your way through a busy and cluttered multi-storey car park. With only 25 seconds on the clock barging your indestructible way through obstacles isn't going to get you very far. The trick here is to pull a Crazy Drift off each ramp to the next level (otherwise known as a Crazy Jump). With a bit of luck, you'll miss some of the traffic and parked cars, and land in a good position to cut diagonally across each floor. With agility and a spot or two of luck you should be able to speed your punter to his destination with maybe a second or two to spare.
Challenge Rating: 8/10



Crazy Zigzag 2
If the first Crazy Zigzag got you fuming you might as well sit down before you read about this one. The task here is similar to the first, only this time you have to ferry seven passengers to drop-off points on the narrow ocean-bound freeway. However, the green stop zone where you must drop each passenger off overlaps the rolling ocean, giving you a space in which to stop the size of a pin's width. The only way to pull this off is to Crazy Drift and brake into each zone, with your flank parallel with the road edge, so that you're facing directly ahead along the next strip of road. The 29 second time limit is harsh to say the least but, as ever, practice makes perfect. Pull this off and you will truly be a Crazy Taxi god.
Challenge Rating: 10/10



Crazy Party
This is the evil brother of the already infuriating Crazy Zigzag 2. There are seven customers and each one is found in an increasingly frustrating location. The seemingly generous 140-second time limit isn't, but with this information you'll be well on your way to cracking the challenge. The customers can be found in the following locations:
1. To the left of where you start.
2. To the right of where you start.
3. Almost directly behind where you start, in the middle of the cluster of cars.
4. One each on the two raised areas (beware the spiral ramp).
5. Two ahead of where you start, on the raised area over the ramp. The final slog to the drop-off point is full of twists and as narrow as you like, so be careful and remember: more haste, less speed.
Challenge Rating: 10/10



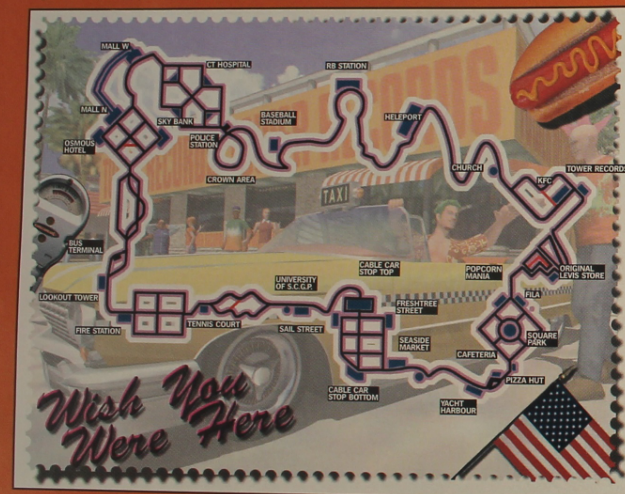
CRAZY GUIDE ORIGINAL CITY

This console-specific metropolis is a fair bit tougher than the Arcade City, mainly due to the fact that its locations are more spread out and much harder to find.



ARCADE CITY

This city is broken into two areas separated by a long freeway. Try to avoid taking the freeway as much as possible because it takes so long to get across. If you simply have to take it, try to make a one way trip with all your fares taking place in the Downtown Bay area.



From the start, bang your cab into reverse as there are two green fares right behind you.

When you're going from the park to the Levi's store or KFC, use the multi-storey car park as a short-cut. At the top of the ramp do a Crazy Drift, then Dash past the parked cars for a Crazy Through combo, finally pull off another Dash to leap off the edge straight ahead of you.

At KFC there are two ways to get to the Church. Always take the left-hand route as it's much, much faster than the right.

On the way to the RB Station, there's a small short-cut where you can cut through the building in front, then into a small yard smashing through a pile of stacked boxes. Storsky And Hutch style.

If you're going to the Baseball Stadium from the Helipad area, you can shave off some time by doing a hard Crazy

Drift to the left off the ramp leading down to the Station and then speed through the car park, completely cutting out that area.

When crossing the freeway, weave between the head-on traffic - you can rack up some massive Crazy Through combos as you go.

Time is always short when you reach the square-shaped area near the Hospital and Bank. There's usually a Red fare or two that can be found here to keep you going.

When a downtown fare wants to go to the parking area or lookout tower, there's a route where you can go underground. Stay topside as the underground route is far more winding and difficult.

Try to stay in the downtown part of the map (near the beach) until you have an S license and you've racked up plenty of time to cross the trickier uptown section.

Green fares near the RB Station and Baseball Stadium will usually want to go across the freeway to the uptown part of the map. Once you've dropped them off you'll need to find fares that'll take you back towards the University where you started.

A good spot to rack up tips is by following the tram. If you drive against the flow of traffic, between the trolley lane and the other vehicles, you'll rack up bigger tips.

Another top tipping spot is on the freeway. Jam your car against the barrier then simply Crazy Dash racking up the Crazy Throughs as you go. Due to heavier traffic the lower lane yields more cash.

Head into the water at the beach area. Here beneath the waves you'll find some very damp hidden customers who can't wait to reach dry land.

CRAZY TAXI



"Tower Records please, givvmo."



Pull a Crazy Dash to make this jump.



Playing chicken with a train. Crazy!

Ignore the arrow. In Arcade City it was your friend, here it definitely is not. While the arrow still points to your destination, there's usually too many buildings blocking the way to make it of any use. Without the arrow to follow you'll need to learn the locations yourself for follow our handy maps.

Perfect the Crazy Drift and Stop. Here you'll find a lot of fares want to go in the opposite direction to the way you're facing, so use these techniques to spin 180°.

Avoid driving through the channels in the harbour area. There's no real problem in using them, but you'll find flying over the open bridge is quicker and a lot more fun.

When crossing the bridge, think back to your Crazy Box training and pull a Crazy Dash in mid-air to avoid slamming into the buildings on the other side. However if you're trying to reach the Marine Plaza from the other side of the drawbridge, use a Limit Cut as you fly over and you should be able to clear the warehouse and reach your target.

You can use the train tunnels to cut from one side of the city to the other. These passages are highly dangerous

though due to the high speed trains that run through. Use at your own risk.

You'll see some fares waiting in the used car lot. These are more trouble than they're worth, so don't bother with them unless you really have to. However, this dodgy motor store is dead handy for clocking up some easy Crazy Throughs, just razz between the parked cars.

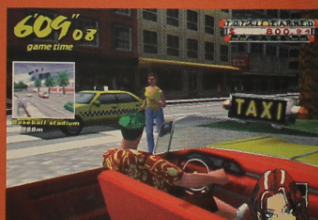
An easy-to-find hidden customer is lurking under water in the docks area. This snorkel-wearing punk usually wants to go to Tower Records.

Approach the highway from the inner city area, then take either route and follow for a while. When it forks, hang a right almost immediately and drop off the highway landing on the roof of a building. Here you'll find another hidden punk waiting to be picked up.

Yet another hidden customer can be found on top of the building behind the raised bridge in the docks. Using the bridge as a ramp, fly up on to the building behind and slam on those anchors.



Avoid traffic and rack up the Crazy Jump combos. Like this!



Park as close to punters as possible to save time.



THINK YOU'VE FINISHED?



THINK AGAIN!

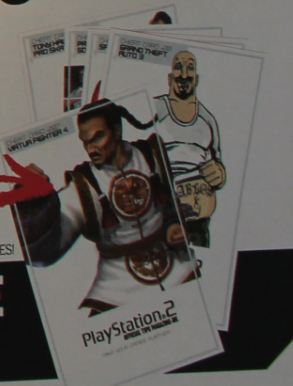


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Armageddon (MDK2)
Armoured Core 2
Army Men: Air Attack
Army Men: Green Rogue
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Army Men: Sgl's Heroes 2
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Atlantic 31: New World
ATV Off-Road Fury
B = 0.2
Baldur's Gate: Dark All.
Baldur's Gate: Gold All.
Baldur's Gate: The Siege
BIG: NBA Street
BIG: SSX Snowboarding
BIG: SSX Tricky
Blood Ona 2
Bloody Roar 3
Bombad Racing
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Bouncer
Britney's Dance Beat
Burnout
C = 0.3
C. Bonaldi: Wolf Cortex
C. 12 Final Resistance
CAPCOM vs SNK 2
Carl Fury
Casper: Spirit Dimensions
Chris Edwards: Ag. Inline
Citizen Kabuto (Giants)
City Crisis
Code Veronica X
Commandos 2
Conflict Zone
Cool Boarder 2001
Crazy Bump's: Car Bat.
Crazy Taxi
Cricket 2002
Cyprien's Chronicles
D = 0.4
Dare Devil
Dark Alliance
Dark Angel
Dark Cloud
Dark Legacy
Dark Summit
Dave Mirra BMX 2
David Beckham Soccer
DDRMAX: (D. D. Rev. 6)
Dead or Alive 2
Delta Force: U. Warfare
Darius
Darius: Ex
Devil May Cry
Digimon World
Dino Stalker
Disney's Dinosaur
Distant Thunder
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Donald Duck: Quack All.</p> | <p>E = 0.5</p> <p>Dracula Last Sanctuary
Draken: Ancient Gates
Driven
Driver 2
Driving Emotion Type-S
Dropship
Drum Mania
Dynasty Warriors 2
Dynasty Warriors 3
F = 0.6
Ecco the Dolphin
Edan, Project
Eighteen Wheeler
Elemental Force
Elite Force: Voyager
Emotion Type-S (Driving)
End Game
Ephemeral Phantasia
Episode 1: Star Fighter
Escape Monkey Island
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ESPN Skateboarding
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Eternal Ring
Eve of Extinction
Everquest
Evil Twin
Extermination
Extreme G 3
Extreme Racer
G = 0.7
F1 2001
F1 2002
F1 Champ. Season 2000
Fante Vision
Fatal Frame
FIFA 2001
FIFA 2002
Fifa World Cup 2002
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Freestyle BMX 2
Four by Four Evolution
Freestyle
Freestyle BMX 2
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Frontline (M. of Honor)
Fur Fighters
H = 0.8
G1 Jockey
Gauntlet: Dark Legacy
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Gitaroo Man
Godai: Elemental Force
Golf: Swing Away
Gradus 3 & 4
Gran Turismo 2
Gran Turismo 3
Gran Turismo Concept
Grand Theft Auto 3
Grandia 2
Graviti Games
Green Rogue
GTA 3
Guilty Gear X
Guilty Gear X Plus
Gun Griffon Blaze
Gundam: J to Jaburo
H30 Surfing</p> | <p>I = 0.9</p> <p>Half Life
Harry Potter
Harvest Moon: Homeland
Headhunter
Hardy Gards
Heroes of Might & Magic
Hidden Invasion
High Heat Baseball 2002
High Heat Baseball 2003
Hot Shots Golf 3
J = 1.0
J. McGrath's Scars World
J. Mowley's Mad Trk
J. Bond: Agent Under Fire
Jade Cocoon 2
Jak & Daxter
Jedi Star Fighter
Jikkyu World Soccer '00
Jikkyu World Soccer '01
Just Bring It
K = 1.1
Kengo: M. Of Bushido
Kessen
Kessen 2
Kinetic
Klonoa 2
Knockout Kings 2001
Knockout Kings 2002
L = 1.2
L. of Kain: Blood Omen 2
L. of Kain: Soul Reaver 2
Last Blade 2
Le Mans 24 Hours
Legend of Black Kat
Legends of Wrestling
Lego Racers 2
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Lotus Challenge
M = 1.3
Madden NFL 2001
Madden NFL 2002
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Major League Baseball '03
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Master of Bushido
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Maximo
McGrath's Scars World
MDK2
Metal Gear Solid 2
Midnight Club
Might & Magic
Mike Tyson Boxing
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Mobile Suit Gun. 2 Front
Mobile Suit Gundam
Monkey Island (Escape)
Monster Jam Max. Destr.
Monsters Inc.
Moto GP
Moto GP 2
Motor Mayhem
Mr. Moskeeto
MTV Music Generator 2</p> | <p>N = 1.4</p> <p>Namco Museum
Nascar 2001
Nascar Heat 2002
NASCAR Thunder 2002
NBA 2K2
NBA Hoopz
NBA Live 2001
NBA Live 2002
NBA Shootout 2001
NBA Street
NBA Tonight 2002
NBA Tonight, ESPN
NCAA Football 2002
NFL 2001
NFL 2002
NFL Blitz 2002
NFL Gameday 2002
NFL Primetime 2002
NFL Quarterback Club 2002
NHL 2001
NHL 2002
NHL Hitz 2002
No-One Lives Forever
Off Road Fury
Off Road Wide Open
Okage: Shadow King
Oni
Onimusha 2
Onimusha: Warlords
OO7 Agent Under Fire
Operation Winlock
Operative (N.O.L.F.)
Orphen
P = 1.6
Pac-Man World 2
Parappa the Rapper 2
Parasite Eve 2
Paris-Dakar Rally
Pirates: Leg. of Black Kat
Player Manager 2001
Player Manager 2002
Polaroid Pete
Police 24/7
Pool Master: Q-Ball
Portal Runner
Prisoner of War
Pro Evolution Soccer 2
Pro Rally 2002
Project Eden
Q = 1.7
Q-Ball: Billiards Master
Quack Attack
Quake 3 Revolution
Quest for Dragon B. Staff
R = 1.8
R. Carmichael's MX 2002
Racer Revenge
Rayman 2
RC Revenge Pro
Ready 2 Rumble 2
Real Robot Regiment
Real Card Soccer 2003
Red Faction
Res. Evil Gun Survivor 2
Res. Evil C. Veronica X
Return to C. Wolfenstein</p> | <p>S = 1.9</p> <p>Revolution: Quake 3
Rez
Ridge Racer 5
Ring of Red
Road Rage
Robot Wars
Romance of 3 Kingdoms 7
Rumble Racing
Rune: Viking Warlord
T = 2.0
S. Palmer's Snowboarder
Sarge's Heroes 2
Seven Blades
Shadow Hearts
Shadow Man 2
Shadow of Memories
Shadow Of Zorro
Silent Hill
Silent Hill 2
Silent Scope
Silent Scope 2
Silphied: Last Planet
Simpsons: Road Rage
Sky Gunner
Sky Odyssey
Sky Surfer
Sled Storm
Smackdown! 3: J. Bring It
Smash Court Tennis
Smugglers Run
Smugglers Run
Soldier of Fortune
Soul Racer 2
Space Channel 5 Part 2
Spiderman 2
Spiderman The Movie
Splashdown
Sprint Cars 2002
Spy Hunter
SSX - Snowboarding
SSX Tricky
Star Trek: Elite Force
Star Wars Jedi Starfighter
Star Wars: Racer Revenge
Star Wars: Star Fighter
State of Emergency
Street Fighter Ex 3
Street, NBA
Stuntman
Summoner
Sunny Garcia: Surfing
Super Bombard Racing
Super Bust A Move
Superstar St. Challenge
Superstars World
Surfing H30
Swing Away Golf
Syphon Filter 3
T = 2.0
T. Woods PGA Tour 2001
Tarzan
Tarzan Freeride
TD Overdrive
Tekken 4
Tekken Tag Tournament
Test Drive
Test Drive: Wide Open
The Bouncer
The Legend of Black Kat
The Mummy Returns
The New Nightmare
The Operative (N.O.L.F.)
The Simpsons: Road Rage
The Weakest Link</p> | <p>U = 2.1</p> <p>The World is not Enough
Theme Park World
This is Football 2002
Throwdown: UFC
Thunderhawk: Op.
Tiger Woods Golf 2002
Time Crisis 2
Time Splitters
Tokyo Extreme Racer
Tomb Raider 4
Tomb Raider 5
Tony Hawk's 2
Tony Hawk's 3
Top Gear: Dare Devil
Top Gun: Combat Zones
Track and Field
Transworld Surf
Triple Play 2002
Triple Play Baseball
Twisted Metal Black
Type-S: Driving Emotion
U = 2.1
UEFA Champion League
Ulti.FChamp: Throwdown
Unreal Tournament
V = 2.2
Vampire Apocalypse
Vampire Night
Victorious Bowers
Virtua Fighter 4
Voyager Elite Force
V-Rally 3
W = 2.3
W. Games Snowboarding
Wacky Races
Warlords (Onimusha)
Warriors of M & M
Way of the Samurai
WDL: War Jetz
Weakest Link
Weir 2
Who Wants 28A Million 2
Wild Wild Racing
Winback
Winning Eleven 6
Winter Sports 2002
Wipeout Fusion
World Cup 2002
World is not Enough
World Outlaws 5 Cars '02
Ww2: Prisoner of War
Worms Blast
Wrath of Cortez
WRC: World Rally Champ
WWF Smackdown 3 J.B.I.
X = 2.4
X Games: Snowboarding
X Games: Snowboarding
X-Squad
Xtreme G3
Y = 2.5
Yanga Caballero: Skater
YuGiOh! Dual Monsters 2
Z = 2.6
Zenon: Front
Zone of the Enders
0.9 = 2.7
007 Agent Under Fire
102 Dalmatians
10 Wheeler
2002 FIFA World Cup
4x4 Evolution
7 Blades</p> |
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